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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Robert Towers on Anthony Burgess • Frank MacShane on John O'Hara

When Elections Hurt Democracy

by Michael Walzer

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Correspondence

Blind obstinacy

To the editors:
Alan Hewitt's piece ("Babbling Books," *TNR*, November 1) raised some interesting points, especially for writers who, like me, are proud to have their books on records and tapes made available without charge to the blind. Although it would be inconceivable for authors to ask for royalties for such recordings it must be noticed that the writers are the only ones in the whole proceeding who forgo any payment whatsoever for their work. It seems to me that when one gives something of value freely as a gift, one has the right to be consulted about how that gift is used. Until I read Mr. Hewitt's article I had no inkling of how bureaucratic rules were arbitrarily made in Washington, with no regard to what the prime movers, in this case, the authors, might prefer.

The argument that the blind must be treated in exactly the same manner as the rest of the public is a curious one. If that were generally the case, seeing-eye dogs would not be allowed in post offices, since other dogs are forbidden on the premises. Special parking places for invalids and differently modeled toilets for the disabled as well as ramps in public places for people in wheelchairs would be outlawed and Braille would be declared as obsolete as Sanskrit. Only the blind are permitted to carry white canes. Should the general public clamor for the same privilege?

Irwin Shaw
Klosters, Switzerland

No witch-hunting here

To the editors:
Contrary to Sidney Blumenthal's inference ("Keeping an Eye on Smiley's People," *TNR*, December 20), I understand perfectly why there has been a "clamor in the press about the internal security section of the Heritage report." The reason for the clamor was an inaccurate Associated Press story on the internal security section, which imported Joe McCarthy where no mention or thought of him was present and created a false impression that the Heritage report advocates repression of dissent. What I do advocate is the creation of an adequate law enforcement and internal security intelligence gathering capacity. No such capacity now exists, and the Heritage report is not the only voice of concern about this problem.

What I do not understand, however, is the apparent impossibility of discussing internal security policy seriously and responsibly without allegations of McCarthyism, witch-hunting, and covert sympathy with Hitler and Stalin. To date this has been the tone of most liberal commentary on any internal security proposals. Because of inaccurate reporting, it also has been the tone of the response to the Heritage report. Surely both liberals and conservatives acknowledge the need for continuing investigation by responsible, professional authorities of terrorism, extremism, and foreign intelligence activities. In resorting to the smear tactics they piously abhor, liberals not only have debased the public discourse but also are failing to make intelligible contributions to the debate on internal security and intelligence policy.

Samuel T. Francis, Policy Analyst
The Heritage Foundation
Washington, DC

Self-fulfilling prophecy?

To the editors:
I would like to respond to a serious misconception contained in Hobart Rowen's recent column on network projections ("Turning Off the Tube," *TNR*, December 13). Rowen and others are mistakenly perpetuating the myth that early projections significantly affect voter turnout, and consequently the results, in local races where the polls remain open. The evidence, past and current, fails to support that claim: 1. In 1964 (a "landslide" year), four separate studies, including surveys done at the universities of California and Michigan, reported no significant changes in voting behavior resulting from election broadcasts. 2. In 1968 (a "close" year), an NBC-commissioned study concluded that the projections had no measurable effect on voting. 3. The Los Angeles County registrar concluded last week, after a month-long study, that "the early network projections and the President's concession had little, if any, impact on the turnout." 4. The national dropoff in voting between 1976 and 1980, continuing a 20-year trend, showed no special pattern in the west. For example, while the percentage turnout among the voting age population was lower than the national average in the states of Washington and Wyoming, it was higher in California, Arizona, and Idaho. 5. Finally, the widely scattered reports of people leaving the voting lines, after hearing of the early call, have not been substantiated.

So, contrary to Mr. Rowen's assertion that in all probability the combination of early NBC projections and Carter's concession had a measurable effect on touch-and-go local races, there is no evidence to support such claims. A uniform national poll closing might indeed assuage the feelings of west coast voters irritated by an early call (which occurs only in a landslide situation), but the evidence says a delayed projection would not alter the election results. This would only delay when people would learn who had won or lost.

NBC News did not "perpetrate outrage" on November 4. We believe that NBC News reported the facts of the presidential election fully and fairly. When the outcome was obvious, we reported it. Not to do so would have been to withhold information, which we believe is never in the public interest. Absolutely no pressure was put on our election unit polling and statistical experts to be 'first." They are professionals and when they tell us what their data shows, we broadcast those projections. We believe it is journalistically correct and responsible to do so.

Lester M. Crystal
Senior Executive Producer
NBC News
Washington, DC

'Hosannahs' for Reagan

To the editors:
Your lead editorial "So Far, So Good—So Far" (*TNR*, December 6) offered an interesting, though seemingly unintended, double entendre. It states, "Reagan's post-election visit to Washington was greeted with hosannahs. . . ."

Anything more than a casual glance at the Scriptures shows that the cry "hosannah" is no exultant hallelujah (though much Judeo-Christian tradition has interpreted it as such). Rather, the meaning is "save us," as in "help!"

Dale Rosenberger, Minister
Trinity United Church of Christ
Westville, Illinois

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TRB

from Washington
January 3 & 10, 1981

The Joy of Sects

Doctrinal feuding is a favorite traditional pastime on the left. In general, the more obscure the theological dispute, the louder the mutual denunciation. No doubt conservatives have been well amused over the years to hear shrieks of "Stalinist!" and "Trotskyite!" emanating from what appeared to them as a homogeneous pink haze. Lately, strange to say, similar sorts of noises have been heard over on the right (and, even stranger, from some of the same noisemakers who used to be on the left). Conservatives have been having a high old time drumming one another out of the movement for deviationism of various sorts. The most vicious fights are over economics, even though they all believe deeply in the free market, private enterprise, and most other canons of the faith. Watching the fur fly is fun, but you can't tell the players without a program.

At last count, there were three major sects:

1. The monetarists or Friedmanites. (As on the left, the suffix "-ist" generally connotes favor, "-ite" disfavor.) At the moment of its greatest real world triumph, this doctrine is rapidly falling out of intellectual fashion. Milton Friedman arrived at the Finland Station, as it were, in November 1979, when the Federal Reserve Board announced its intention to directly control the size of the money supply, instead of concentrating on interest rates. Monetary theory holds that the key to controlling inflation is to keep the money supply from increasing faster than real growth in the economy. (Most monetarists would call this "naive" monetary theory and insist that they believe something much more complex and subtle.)

There are two problems with monetary theory. One is that the money supply turns out to be a slippery beast, harder to control than people thought. For example, I pay my rent out of a so-called "money market fund" run by a stock brokerage firm. It works for me just like a checking account with high interest, but the Federal Reserve has no control over it. The Federal Reserve keeps redefining what it means by "money" and feverishly trying to discipline the creature, but with little success. Meanwhile, interest rates roller-coaster, making everyone dizzy.

The other problem with controlling the money supply is what would happen if it worked. The economy runs on money, true, and is soaking up too much of it, also true. The economy also runs on oil and also is soaking up too much of that. No one (least of all conservatives) is suggesting arbitrary limits on the amount of oil we import, because the effect would be too wrenching unless we first reduce the *demand* for oil. The same is true about money. A policy of restricting the money supply, and nothing more, would slow the dollar-expansion of the economy, but most of the bite would come out of real growth, not out of inflation. In fact, that's just what's been happening since November 1979.

2. The balanced budgeteers. These are the traditionalists, and a dying breed. They believe that inflation is caused by government deficits. This belief derives emotionally from the classic conservative antipathy to big government, and from a Victorian association of debt with general dissipation. The theoretical underpinning is from Keynes: by spending more than it takes in, the government creates excess demand for goods, driving up prices. (Intramural right-wing critics sometimes deviously label the balanced budgeteers as "Keynesians"—thus turning against the traditionalists a term of abuse they themselves popularized on the right as a malediction on liberals for promiscuous use of budget deficits to stimulate demand artificially, the exact opposite of what the traditionalists stand for. Got that?)

The main defect of the traditionalist dogma is that it addresses a problem that doesn't exist. Today's inflation is not caused primarily by excess demand. It is a self-feeding process built into the structure of the economy, aggravated every now and then by oil shocks. Even during recessions, when aggregate demand is weak, inflation continues at rates unimaginable until recently. Furthermore, the federal deficit—the great traditionalist totem—is an irrelevant number. It ignores state budgets, which put the total government sector in surplus, but it also ignores various "off-budget" federal programs which encourage private borrowing. Finally, it is easier to denounce "big government" in general than it is to find any particular item to cut, as Ronald Reagan is about to discover in his search for $90 billion of "waste."

3. The supply-siders. These are the new boys in town, known to their detractors as the "free lunch" crowd. They say the main economic problem is low productivity, and the primary cause is high tax rates which discourage people from working and saving. They have nothing against cutting the federal budget (neither do the monetarists, for that matter), but they vehemently oppose letting concern about the deficit get in the way of cutting taxes. Supply-side zealots insist that because of the "Laffer curve"—*their* totem—tax rate cuts can increase tax revenues by awakening the nation's productive forces from their tax-induced stupor. (The free lunch.) Less extreme supply-siders say that it makes little difference whether government activity is financed by borrowing or taxing, since in either case the resources are pilfered from the private sector (unless they are "monetized" by printing money—a bow to the monetarists).

The main problem with the supply side dogma is that you can't cure inflation by increasing productivity, and you probably can't do a lot about productivity until you've reduced inflation. Inflation now is about 12 percent. If we could increase productivity growth from zero (about where it is now) to four percent (*double* the average during the properous postwar years), it would be a miracle. But this miracle, taken alone, still would leave us with eight percent inflation. Inflation—by creating uncertainty, by discouraging thrift, by diverting creativity and investment, by rending the social fabric—does much more damage to productivity than tax rates do. Some of these effects work *through* the tax code, which should be reformed (among other ways) to take inflation into account. But I doubt that tax rate slashing, pure and simple, will do much for our feeble economy.

But that's just a liberal's opinion. And who said I was entitled to play?

Michael Kinsley

(Richard Strout is on vacation.)

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Outraged?

The song says, "This Land is My Land . . ." That's right. It is your land, but the rich have taken most of it away from you and me. Except maybe some of us with a small lot with a 14% mortgage. If every person had his share of the land — his share of the income from the land and natural resources of this country — no one would need be on welfare. In the early days of this Nation when people had access to land through the Homestead Acts no one was on welfare. In this affluent society there is plenty for all, but the unequal distribution of wealth has created poverty and a class of professional welfare recipients that is growing so fast it threatens the stability of government.

The unfair distribution of wealth results from the special privileges government grants big landowners. Government takes from other people, as taxes, that which they have earned by their labor, and uses this money to pay for public schools, public housing, highways, courthouses, libraries. All these raise the value of surrounding lands held mostly by big speculators.

In California, 18 families in one year received "welfare checks" from the government amounting to $9 million — averaging a half million dollars each. These welfare checks were not paid to poor people, laborers, nor to businessmen, who produce goods and services — only to rich landholders. These were subsidies for **not** growing crops on **their** land!

A sensible government would increase the taxes on land and not tax buildings. Such a tax would encourage speculators to put idle land to use — or sell it to someone who will. When land is used, jobs are created.

Morgan Harris
Prof. of Writing, Univ. of Cal.

Outraged? Then photo-copy this editorial and mail to your favorite magazine editor, the TV networks, and to your county commissioners and state legislators.

Send a Post Card for a free copy of "The Tax To End All Taxes." by David Hapgood.

"CATALYST" — a report on land value taxation in various parts of the world by Prof. Steven Cord, $5 cloth, postpaid.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

January 3 & 10, 1981

Not One Cent for Tribute

Ronald Reagan has said, in an off-hand and casual way, about the captivity of Americans in Tehran what Jimmy Carter should have said, as a deliberate and calculated statement of US policy, 14 months ago: we will not pay ransom to secure their release. Carter might then have added that, unless the hostages were released and released quickly, the cost to Iran would be unpredictable and incalculable. Jimmy Carter was probably incapable of such an utterance, and even if some hardliner on his staff actually persuaded him to let the words pass his lips, he would have been incapable of a policy to back them up. This the Iranians understood.

The mullahs took Jimmy Carter's measure early on and they took it accurately. When they play cards, they look not at the cards but at the faces of their opponents. They looked at Jimmy Carter and he showed them the unmistakable face of servility. His face told them that they'd run no risk and incur no cost. The record of his chief foreign policy officer, Cyrus Vance, told them the same thing. (As one letter writer to the *New York Times* put it last week, Vance seemed to think he was head of the Red Cross instead of secretary of state). President Carter's words told them, too, quite specifically, that we would abjure a use of force. And when, months later, he resorted not to punitive but simply to minimal force aimed at extricating our hostages, he did so half-heartedly, timidly, as if to doom the action in advance, which it did.

Why recriminate, readers may ask, in the dusk of Carter's tenure, against the policy that probably, even more than his non-policy on inflation, destroyed his presidency? The reason is that Jimmy Carter is still conducting the identical policy of capitulation that he has been conducting since he signaled his willingness to capitulate, first by dispatching Ramsey Clark to Tehran, then by dancing attendance on Kurt Waldheim's craven ministrations. Each concession, we see now, has only whetted the appetite of the transgressors. And now Carter's concessions will be seen by Iran as the minimum negotiating position from which his successor will have to begin his effort to free the hostages. One probable reason why Prime Minister Rajai's government violated its agreement to keep the latest diplomatic exchanges with Washington secret (who would trust any commitments from the Iranians?) is to have these precedents publicly acknowledged by the outgoing administration before Reagan comes to office. Of course this locks in the Iranians themselves as well as (in their view) the Americans: we can offer no less, but they can accept no less.

So in these last days, as the vestiges of power slip from his hands, Jimmy Carter has been committing this country to ever-greater accommodations to blackmailers and extortionists. His lawyers say these accommodations do not exceed his legal authority. That is a disputed issue, involving constitutional questions. But what else would administration lawyers say? That's what Lloyd Cutler is paid to say. What is not a matter of opinion—as evident a fact as could be—is that Car-

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drawing by Vint Lawrence

ter, in these squalid negotiations, has acquiesced to humiliations greater than any imposed on the US before in its history. The second Christmas taunting of the hostage families shows once again how much the mullahs revel in these humiliations.

The options of the incoming administration are not many; they are far fewer than they would have been if the outgoing one had behaved differently, or even spoken differently. But the Iranians are now also taking Ronald Reagan's measure. If, before January 20, they somehow decide to free the captives and accept the much-too-generous and legally questionable arrangements President Carter has offered, you will know that they feared for the Iranian future. But Reagan probably will not get off the hook so easily, and his casual comment about Iranian "barbarians" as he left church on a Sunday morning does not exhaust what is expected of him. Nor will it impress the Iranians.

The negotiations, conducted wholly on Iran's terms through the untrustworthy offices of Algeria, should be terminated at once. The American hostages should be seen as prisoners of war. We must make clear that any further harm that befalls these prisoners will be weighed in account against the sitting rulers of Iran. Iran itself has abiding national interests which just possibly will be asserted by the rational remnant in the country, through the mad crossfire of its politics—but only if we plausibly threaten these interests. When Afghani refugees in Tehran stormed the Soviet embassy on the first anniversary of the Russian invasion, Moscow promptly announced itself the aggrieved party and demanded compensation from Iran. They will probably get an apology, and maybe more. The present negotiations between the US and Iran, by contrast, are being conducted as if the Iranians were the aggrieved party.

George Kennan has suggested that the circumstances warrant a declaration of war. That does not necessarily mean waging war against Iran. Maybe what needs to be done would not require such a declaration. First among these acts is a blockade of Iran or its equivalent, the mining of Iran's ports. We should have done one of these long before we entered the year we've just left, when oil flowing from Iran to Europe and Japan would have stopped flowing. The oil has stopped flowing anyway, not because of us, but because of a war between two neighboring zealot Islamic states. The blockade is easier to enact now, and less consequential. The Soviets also are preoccupied, and their far-flung interests are more vulnerable.

We have urged before a less limited and less porous embargo on trade with Iran, and one that explicitly includes food and medicine. Our allies and friends must also be given to understand that if they persist in commerce with Iran there will be a heavy cost to pay in declining commerce with us. We are still economically

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strong enough to assert in this way our interest in defending Americans (and others too) against acts of war and acts of piracy against governments. What stands in the way has been our own cupidity. Here the principled cupidity of the Republicans may turn out to be the significant impediment. If so, that will be a significant and dangerous message to the Iranians and Russians, that a Republican administration, for all its tough talk, prizes commerce over security. The opposition of the Republican right to the grain boycott of the Soviet Union after Afghanistan is a disheartening augury on this score.

Finally, we should say to Iranians living in our country that those who genuinely seek asylum from the crazed and primitive forces in power in their country are welcome here. Those other Iranians who have become, through no first act of ours, enemy aliens are obliged to go. In the context of the Tehran captivity, this is a most generous freedom.

Unless Reagan begins to move quickly in this direction, he will be trapped into a foreign policy and into attitudes toward foreign policy he was elected to displace. Whatever he ultimately may decide to do in this area, he will find old State Department hands and establishment recruits to the international affairs apparatus eager to conduct business as usual. The best way for Reagan to ensure that this sabotage on behalf of the failed orthodoxies of diplomacy does not succeed is to remove their most faithful adepts. Like the French civil service, these gentlemen have survived from regime to regime preaching the doctrine of accommodation at any cost. In this regard Harold Saunders, who has presided over the Iranian spectacle and is always eager to preside over others, should be the first to go. The effect would be tonic. Some liberals, and doubtless many readers of *TNR* among them, are much disquieted by the notion that the doctrine of accommodation is spent as an idea and spent as a strategy too. This is so because replacing it implies greater reliance on force, or the contingent use of force, than we have felt comfortable assuming since Vietnam. One cannot have a strong foreign policy beyond where one's military can reach; this impels choices that it has been more pleasant to avoid. But the current impasse over Iran is the quintessential expression—there have been others—of the passivist and always accommodationist orientation that succeeded our previous promiscuous instinct for belligerence first. One reason people cling to the notions that underlie the present is that the alternatives are usually falsely posed. Even so sage and honest a commentator as Tom Wicker has written that "history will honor [Carter] for having refused to pay ransom or to launch a military attack on Iran." Of course Carter did not really refuse to pay ransom; what he refused to pay was only a particularly brazen ransom. But that inaccuracy aside, the options were never and are not even now simply limited to the stark extremes of paying ransom or bombing Iran. There may well be individuals in the Reagan camp who believe that America will not have retrieved its honor in Iran until some vast revenge of death is visited on the Iranians. That would be a bankrupt policy, injurious to what the US hopes for in Iran. But equally bankrupt is a policy that begins with the desire to pacify and appease and placate the enraged. The Ayatollah Khomeini has helped many in the US to see this, and in the coming months and years the imam's allies and colleagues around the third world will begin to experience the consequences of this new and liberating perception by the American people.

Something else has been perceived also. For more than a year, journalists, clerics, and professors have been dishing up the usual anthropological abracadabra about the different ways and different values of the Iranians. Our chore was less to react or initiate than to understand. Any behavior, however outrageous, would be explained and finally explained away. *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner.* In the end, it turns out, grasping the motives of the mullahs requires no course in Persian anthropology. Deceitful they are, and cruel too—but not so strange to a world that has known other mad rulers. For what, after all the posturing and talk of holy men, does it take to win the release of our hostages? Money, lots of it. That is something we can understand. And it is something that should provoke nothing so much as disgust. Any appropriate policy toward Iran must begin with this feeling of revulsion.

White House Watch

Power to Reagan

Ronald Reagan's transition crew is fashioning a presidential establishment that is likely to resemble the Nixon White House structure more closely than the Reaganites care to advertise. Or, it may be more accurately said, the White House power center that Richard Nixon wanted and never achieved. The similarities of aim tend to be lost in the Reagan talk of cabinet government, a shrunken White House staff, low-key assistants with low profiles, and the like. But the similarities are real.

They begin with the acknowledged, indeed the proclaimed, purpose to drill Reagan cabinet and subcabinet nominees from the start, beginning before the inaugural January 20, in the doctrine that they are *his* appointees, that their ideas are to be subordinate to *his* ideas, that it's to be *his* administration and not their or their agencies' and group constituencies' administration. That was Nixon's purpose in 1969. But he got around to extending his dominance from the White House to federal departments and agencies by infiltrat-

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ing their bureaucracies with his devotees only after he was reelected in 1972, when Watergate was closing in on him and it was too late. Reagan is wasting no time in getting at it, government-wide and in his immediate White House organization.

There is a Nixon precedent, for example, for putting counselor-to-be Edwin Meese III, now directing the Reagan transition in Washington, over the chief assistants for domestic and foreign policy, and placing him also in charge of the new President's cabinet communications and relationships. H. R. Haldeman had a similar charter at the start of the Nixon presidency. The assistant for national security and foreign policy, Henry Kissinger, refused to tolerate Haldeman's oversight after this reporter disclosed it, and John Ehrlichman, the domestic assistant, pretended that it never existed. Haldeman as Nixon's chief of staff was in charge of everything, including policy formulation and the entire White House operation. Meese is supposed to leave White House operations to a designated chief of staff, James A. Baker III, and confine himself to policy formulation for the President. Meese, a longtime Reagan associate, and Baker, a Texas veteran of Gerald Ford's 1976 campaign who calls himself "the new boy on the block," worked out a division of responsibility and put their understanding into writing after Reagan asked Baker to be the chief of staff. Meese implied at a press conference that Reagan reviewed the agreement and approved it, but that has not been confirmed. Baker has told reporters that he expects to have a part in domestic and foreign policy discussions, too, and Meese has said that he will participate in operational discussions when he needs to.

TWO NIXON and Ford White House veterans who have discussed the arrangement with Meese and Baker conclude that Baker in unstated fact will be Meese's deputy and also that it will work all right if nobody makes a point of the actuality. Michael K. Deaver, another Reagan Californian and favorite, is to be an assistant to the President and a deputy to Baker in overall charge of Reagan's appointments, scheduling, travel arrangements, Nancy Reagan's staff, and the President's important military office. It's understood among Reagan transitionists that Deaver is to have a dual role that further complicates the Meese-Baker relationship and arrangement. Deaver, in fulfilling his "line" responsibilities for appointments, scheduling, and so on, is to function as Baker's deputy. As a Reagan intimate, a California public relations type who enjoys Reagan's total trust, Deaver also is to be a policy consultant in his own right, dealing directly with the President over the whole range of presidential concerns. This sort of mishmash may seem to invalidate any notion or possibility of an effective Reagan power center at the White House. Maybe it doesn't, though. Old Washington and White House hands who know the individuals concerned and understand the problems of presidential power and management say the personalities of Reagan, Meese, Baker, and Deaver are such that, against all reason, it may turn out to be a feasible arrangement.

However that may be, the aim and purpose are beyond doubt. Meese said at a Washington press conference November 26 that the recommendations of a panel of the National Academy of Public Administration for restructuring the White House were being studied by Ronald Reagan and "will be reflected in what we plan to do." The report speaks of a "small" White House staff designed to "facilitate collaboration with others, not . . . to impose the will of the President and his staff" upon all government. That is window-dressing. The report's thrust is toward beginning at the White House to correct "a radical diffusion of power, a weakening of the forces for coherence and unity" that in the panelists' view has been corroding government and society for many years. At the White House, the report argues, "We can begin to strengthen the forces of cohesion and integration in our political system by strengthening the capacity of the President for leadership." In part the report proposes to do this by redefining and narrowing the President's specific responsibilities and dispersing responsibilities that can be met elsewhere to agencies outside the White House and the Executive Office of the President. But the central thrust, as noted, is toward concentrating appropriate power in the presidency and enlarging, not diminishing, the staffs needed to apply the power for the President.

Unstated purposes aside, the Reagan White House structure will look pretty much like the Carter structure. The White House transition team under Baker and David Gergen, a talented veteran of the Ford White House, is putting together a senior staff of around 10 or 11 assistants, the current number. The domestic policy staff under Martin Anderson, a conservative economist who worked with Arthur Burns in the early Nixon White House and has contributed a dash of intelligence to the Reagan operation since 1976, is intended to be somewhat smaller than the staff directed the past four years by Stuart Eizenstat. Its functions of developing ideas and coordinating and monitoring agency labors are unlikely to be as different as the Reaganites automatically predict. The same may be expected of the National Security Council staff under Richard V. Allen, who has been deplorably maligned in this journal and who, willingly and wisely, is prepared to leave the public arena to Reagan's secretaries of state and defense.

A material difference between the recent and the new will be in the structure and mission of the public liaison staff under Elizabeth Dole, wife of Senator Robert Dole and former federal trade commissioner. In principle there will be no house blacks, Hispanics, other ethnic representatives, or union, labor, and women's advocates who are designated as such at the Reagan White House. The Carter equivalents function under staff chief Jack Watson, independently in

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theory of public liaison director Anne Wexler. (Women until recently had their very own senior assistant, Sarah Weddington.) Actually, the Reagan equivalents will be serving their constituencies as special assistants have done since Nixon's time. But the Reagan specials will be melded into Dole's public liaison staff and assigned general responsibilities that overlie their primary identities as house this-and-that.

Two zany ideas for White House organization have died and a third is withering. The notion of a four-headed press secretaryship has been discarded and a search is on for a spokesman, not necessarily a journalist, who will deserve the press corps's respect. Senator Paul Laxalt, who is reputed to be Reagan's closest friend in Congress, announced after the election that he'd be the new President's chief communicator with Congress, with offices and six assistants at the White House. He was brought to realize that an inherent conflict with the Senate and House Republican leadership would be ruinous and he abandoned the project December 4. Some journalists keep promoting the thought of a cabinet executive committee of select advisers to the President. These reporters don't seem to hear Meese when he repeatedly indicates that this isn't likely. But some variation of it may be tried.

Reagan's cabinet selections are another subject for another column, if ever, with one exception. For political and constituency reasons that are understandable but nevertheless regrettable, Reagan has accorded cabinet status to his designated ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick. Carter made the same mistake for similar reasons with Andrew Young in 1977, and the result was disastrous for all concerned. The chief US representative at the UN is declared by law to be, and in practice should be, indisputably subject to the direction of the secretary of state and, through him, of the President. Cabinet status, with its implication of generally independent status, impairs and may destroy that essential factor of subordination. Kirkpatrick's pre-appointment rhetoric in favor of US support for "moderately repressive" regimes in Latin America and elsewhere hardly suggests the requisite sense of discipline.

John Osborne

Why everybody loves
a White House Conference.

Goodies for Oldies

When the trustees of our government decide to convene a blue-ribbon panel, a commission of distinguished Americans, or a White House conference, the issue to be pondered invariably falls into one of two categories. The first are genuinely serious and complex problems that nearly everyone recognizes and wants something done about, though they have broad differences on just what it should be. Here the purpose of fobbing off the problem on a panel, commission, or conference is to stall for time while elected officials try to figure out what the hell to do. The process also gives the impression that something actually *is* being done, but without creating all the political liabilities that real action would produce. The second category encompasses issues about which there is no great public interest or concern. In this case the people involved are quite sure of what they want done, but they have to persuade the electorate—or, more likely, the nation's elected officials and opinion-makers—that there really is a problem and that action is required.

The White House Conference on Aging, which falls into the latter category, will be held next year from November 30 to December 3. Its purpose is to provide "the opportunity to confront both short-term and long-range issues of concern to an aging society and to obtain recommendations and direction for responsive public actions." Already the government has spent two years and more than three million dollars organizing and planning the affair, and another three million will be spent in the next year (barring budget cuts by the new administration). Right now some 65 federal employees are working full-time on the project. President-elect Reagan probably could cancel the conference if he wanted to, but the odds are it will go off on schedule, though its current director surely will be replaced and some staff people may be as well.

The conference will bring together some 2,000 delegates from every state. One thousand of the delegates will be appointed by state governors, according to detailed quotas based on age, sex, race, and place of residence (urban or rural). Each state delegation must meet the same broad guidelines: half of the members must be 55 or older, and half must be women. In addition, each state is assigned specific quotas based on certain characteristics of its population. For example, 84 of California's 92 delegates must be city dwellers, seven must be black, 15 must be Hispanic, and two must be "Pacific Asians." Idaho, by contrast, is not required to have any blacks, Hispanics, or Pacific Asians, but it must have one American Indian, and three of its six delegates must be from cities. Some states, like Maine and Nebraska, are allotted no minority delegates at all. Of the remaining 1,000 delegates, 535 will be appointed by members of Congress (one apiece). Another 200 slots will be filled by members of the various technical committees and advisory committees and by state coordinators. The remaining 260 delegates will be named by the conference's administrators to provide any type of representation still needed. If, for example, the delegates chosen by congressional members are heavily weighted toward whites or males or young people, they will be countered by more minority representatives, women, and old people. Nothing will be allowed to

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stand in the way of a perfectly representative conference.

It's unlikely anything substantial will come out of this conference, if past conferences are any guide. The sponsors credit the 1961 conference (the first authorized by law, though President Truman had held one on his whim in 1951) with the old-age programs enacted in the 1960s, particularly Medicare and Medicaid, and the 1971 conference with the Older Americans Act, which established various other programs for the elderly. But these programs probably would have been enacted anyway, given the prevailing climate of opinion and the inclinations of Congress. In any case, by now most of the obvious needs of old people already have been met, thanks to those very programs and, of course, Social Security. The conference's executive director, Jerome Waldie, hastens to note that its success shouldn't be judged by tangible achievements. "The conference is designed to sensitize policy-makers in the public and private sectors to deficiencies perceived by the aged in programs for the elderly," he says. If it does nothing more than that it will be a success.

This conference is likely to gather in a somewhat less optimistic mood than its 1971 counterpart. The election of Ronald Reagan, after all, gives no reason to hope for expensive new government undertakings. The last conference, by contrast, was still flush with the spirit of the Great Society. Its 253 pages of recommendations are devoted mostly to repeating the demand for more money for assorted programs for old people, ranging from calls for national health insurance and a cabinet-level "Department of Elder Affairs" to a demand for the elimination of "red tape and procedural delays in the production of housing for the elderly." Only occasionally did the conferees pause from crying "gimme" to interject an opinion on an unrelated matter, as when they demanded that President Nixon "end the war in Southeast Asia."

Perhaps in recognition of the public's lack of enthusiasm for bold new initiatives, the White House has made the 1981 conference a bigger, more comprehensive affair. Leading up to the conference are thousands of "community forums," 57 state and regional conferences, and more than 30 "mini-conferences" devoted to particular problems (ranging from mental health and housing to "spiritual well-being," "energy," and "foot care"). A conference brochure says, "Like the New England town meetings of yesteryear, community forums bring together friends, neighbors and concerned citizens to discuss the status of older Americans in their community." The state conferences, it says, "allow citizens, organizations and government leaders to examine the quality of life for older Americans within each state." But it is plain that the real purpose of all these gatherings is to bring together all the people who have something to gain from new federal programs, in the hope that they will find ways to further their own common objectives—or, to put it less charitably, their own special interest. At work is a process of political coalition-building, an exercise in mutual back scratching. It is no surprise that a host of organizations whose interests touch on the elderly have been enthusiastic supporters of the White House conference, with some even going so far as to stage their own mini-conferences. Some organizations, such as the American Psychological Association, the American Dental Association, and the American Association of Homes for the Aging, have an obvious financial stake in new federal programs to subsidize the services they provide. Other organizations, like the Gray Panthers and the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging, simply stand to gain in status and influence by the exposure this conference affords. Old people in general may benefit in one way or another from new programs, but like other interest groups they may lack a proper sense of what is reasonable and affordable and what isn't.

When the delegates to the final conference and its many predecessors aren't scheming to raid the Treasury, they can be counted on to produce an awesome amount of impenetrable or meaningless verbiage. At a recent mini-conference on long-term care held in Reston, Virginia, the delegates approved 25 pages of recommendations. Some of the less controversial: "The planning process at all levels should take into account demographic, health, social, economic and political trends." "Education of long term care providers should have an increased focus on psycho-social and cultural needs of patients as well as health needs." But the urge to demand more federal money never can be suppressed for long, and this mini-conference wound up by suggesting dozens of ways in which it might be spent to promote "long term care." Presumably the delegates to the Foot Care and Spiritual Well-Being mini-conferences will not fail to provide their own recommendations for disposing of any surplus federal cash.

Aside from this sort of advice, though, it's hard to see what there is to be gained by another White House conference on anything, including aging. No one doubts that there are important issues involving the old, the most ominous being the chronic insolvency of the Social Security system. Nor does anyone question that some old people are in sore need of help. But these are not reasons for wasting so much time and money on another meaningless conference. If Congress and the president need to know more about the problems of old people, there are quicker and cheaper methods

To Our Readers:

Joyce Carol Oates's collection of stories, *A Sentimental Education*, will be published this month by Dial Press.

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—and better ones. In fact, one could hardly devise a process less likely to produce a reasonable, dispassionate set of proposals than this one. Everything in the process is geared toward encouraging the participants to demand everything they can get, since the only people inclined to participate in this sort of thing are those who have something to gain from new government ventures. Completely absent is any effort to examine these demands critically, to consider their benefits as compared to their costs, and to weigh them against other important public concerns. The spectacle is not one of public-spirited citizens wrestling with difficult choices, but of children in a toy store who want everything they see. That's why no one but its participants is likely to pay much attention to what comes out of this White House conference, and why no one should.

Stephen Chapman

Hard times ahead for *Ostpolitik*.

Poland and Berlin

West Berlin

Next August will mark the 20th anniversary of the building of the Berlin Wall, which divides this sprawling German city into separate political, ideological, and economic worlds. Yet paradoxically, the wall has made the two Berlins more mutually dependent than anyone would have imagined a generation ago when the Communists cut the city in half along the border of the former Soviet occupation sector.

In both West and East Berlin one becomes acutely aware of the uncertainties affecting the conduct of *Ostpolitik* by the government of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt in Bonn, in severe contrast with the ostensive self-assurance and bloody-mindedness displayed by the East German communist regime. The East Germans need the billions of dollars that Bonn, in a variety of ways, pours into their economy. But East Germany controls the flow of West German visitors to their families in communist territory, a factor of extraordinary emotional significance in the Federal Republic. Annually, eight million West Germans, three million of them from West Berlin alone, visit the German Democratic Republic, and an interruption of this traffic is a constant West German nightmare. For Schmidt it also is a political nightmare.

In October, for example, East Germany suddenly increased from 15 to 25 the number of deutsche marks that each West German visitor had to exchange daily for East German marks (and did away with special low rates for children and pensioners) as a condition of entry. Whether this was intended to limit contacts with the West as the Polish crisis kept mounting or to earn more hard currency (as the East Germans innocently claimed), the result was that visits dropped instantly by 60 percent, and a shock spread throughout West Germany, especially West Berlin.

Interestingly, Bonn failed to protest or retaliate. I was told privately that West Germany was determined to avoid any action interfering with *Ostpolitik* in general, and access to West Berlin in particular. Schmidt was said to be considering subsidizing the difference between the new and the old exchange requirements for the children and the pensioners.

Most analysts in West Berlin thought that East Germany had imposed the new requirements to emphasize to Bonn that any hostile acts by West Germany (such as a cut-off in trade or credits) in the event of a Warsaw Pact invasion of Poland would end the flow of West German visitors that has been permitted since the signing of the quadrapartite agreement on access to West Berlin. In short, it was a warning.

In East Berlin, officials told me that if Bonn "overreacted" to the intervention in Poland, the status of West Berlin might be called into question. Their reasoning was that West German retaliation against "fraternal help" to Polish Communists would be a violation of various existing agreements between the two Germanies, justifying measures against West Berlin.

Much as East Germany needs West Germany and West Berlin economically, she clearly is prepared to pay a price if involvement in Poland is judged necessary by Moscow and its allies. East Germany is the most forceful of the Warsaw Pact nations in arguing publicly that Polish experiments in free trade unions and the like simply must be eradicated. The rigidly authoritarian East Germans do not wish to be polluted by the Polish example. If necessary, they are ready to trigger a Berlin crisis to keep the West Germans in check. Similarly, the East Germans know that Bonn is *not* prepared to pay too high a price to dissuade the Warsaw Pact from going into Poland.

Shortly before I flew to Berlin, a senior Western European statesman told me that "there are two basic realities one must always bear in mind about West Germany." One of them, he said, is that "detente constitutes a primary vested interest for Bonn." The other is "the ever-powerful sentiment for German reunification—some day." This judgment was corroborated in discussions I had with West German officials, parliamentarians, and academics at a conference in West Berlin. Speaking privately, they conceded that West Germany would abstain from retaliatory measures in the event of an invasion of Poland—unless the invaders were met with resolute Polish resistance and thousands died. My interlocutors agreed that this was a cynical attitude, but they invited me to consider West German "realities."

The principal reality, I was informed, was the need to keep *Ostpolitik* (continued economic and human con-

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tacts with East Germany) alive at almost any cost. Both Germanies have profited from detente between the superpowers, and Bonn is exceedingly reluctant to sacrifice this relationship despite declarations by Schmidt, along with other NATO heads of governments, that detente, already strained by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, would not survive an attack on Poland. Schmidt often has described the population of East Germany as "our 17 million hostages," and Bonn does not want to abandon them altogether. An end of human contacts between the two Germanies would be an emotional blow to West Germans and would mean postponing indefinitely the reunification dream. The Polish crisis may be the ultimate litmus test of Bonn's dedication to NATO solidarity.

Economic considerations also matter. West Germany is undergoing its first serious economic crisis since postwar reconstruction, and the Federal Republic anticipates close to one million unemployed workers early in 1981. An interruption of exports to the Soviet Union, East Germany, and the rest of the Eastern European bloc inevitably would increase unemployment in West Germany—something Chancellor Schmidt may be unwilling to tolerate. December riots in West Berlin over housing problems of German and foreign workers highlighted rising political and economic tensions in West Germany.

Though West Germany joined its NATO partners at a European summit meeting on December 2 in warning the Russians that an invasion of Poland would have serious consequences for international relations, there is a sense in Western Europe of a poignant irony: in the end, the powerful Federal Republic may be the weak link among the big powers in the alliance if an emergency develops in Poland.

Still, it is necessary to look at Bonn's policies in the context of broader NATO problems. Shortly after his reelection last October, Schmidt stunned the Carter administration by announcing that West Germany would be unable to meet the 1977 NATO commitment to increase its defense expenditures at a three percent annual rate in real terms. Budgetary difficulties were invoked, but the real catch was political. NATO, presumably, will not collapse if Bonn falls short of its pledge by one percent or so. But political signals, suggesting that West Germany no longer considers defense one of its main priorities, are devastating at a time when "Euroneutralist" sentiment is spreading throughout the continent. Denmark, Norway, and the Benelux countries are at the margin of NATO's overall defense effort, and Europeans already have coined the term "Scandilux" to describe the slide toward neutralism by the Scandinavians and Benelux. With Bonn trapped by its ambiguous ambitions, there is reason to speculate darkly about West Germany's long-range role in the alliance. Meanwhile, East Germany has raised its defense spending by 8.4 percent in 1981.

In the meantime, France appears to have decided to become America's principal ally, superseding West Germany, even though President Giscard d'Estaing is not contemplating a return to NATO's integrated military command. When Bonn was becoming embroiled in the dispute with Washington over increased defense expenditures, the French were beginning to call attention to the fact that they are spending proportionally more than the West Germans. Though the Schmidt-Giscard relationship is considered a guarantee of European stability, there is growing friction between Bonn and Paris, and the Germans are frankly unhappy over France's discreet but unmistakable courtship of the Reagan administration. And France is suspicious that the British want to resurrect a "special relationship" with the US, perhaps based on the conservative ascendancy in the two English-speaking countries.

West Berliners know that, ultimately, they are pawns in the fluctuations of East-West relations. They worry about continued contacts with relatives in East Germany and about the city's economy if things get out of hand in Eastern Europe. West Berlin has stocked food and fuel for five months in the event of a new blocade, but this does not allay the discomfort, and West Berliners cannot forget the many dimensions of their dependence on East Berlin and East Germany.

In East Berlin there is a sense of defiant toughness, perhaps designed to cover up its rulers' fears about the way the Poles are undermining the communist system in Eastern Europe. For the first time since World War II a statue of Frederick the Great, the Prussian unifier of Germany, has been placed on a pedestal on Unter den Linden. He arrogantly faces West Berlin.

Tad Szulc

What it really means.

A Good Business Climate

A consensus is growing that America must improve its business climate. Instead of hampering business, it is time to turn it loose. For clues about how to foster such an environment, there is no better place to look than Greenville, South Carolina. Greenville, one of the Sunbelt's fastest growing areas, has the enviable reputation of having the best business climate in the nation and, indeed, in the Western world.

I spent a few months soaking up Greenville's climate in 1978 as I researched the J.P. Stevens dispute. Stevens has its regional headquarters and 18 of its 85 mills in the immediate vicinity. And despite the hoopla over the recent Stevens contract covering 10 of its mills, not one of those new union mills is anywhere near Greenville.

Nestled in the rolling hills of the Piedmont, Green-

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ville takes pride in the economic reputation that is giving it a significance beyond its population (about 60,000 in the city and 285,000 in Greenville County). Greenville's unionization level is a mere 2.3 percent—considerably less than half of South Carolina's own lowest-in-the-nation 6.6 percent rate. The average wage rate is $5.48 per hour, compared to a national average of $7.48 per hour. Throughout the state, new industry is exempt from all county property taxes (except public school and special taxes) for five years. There are no statewide real or personal property taxes. All air and water pollution control equipment is exempt from local taxes. And South Carolina features the fifth lowest per capita tax burden in the nation. It is also one of 20 states with a "right-to-work" law, which prohibits closed union shops, and one of only two states with a constitutional requirement to balance its budget.

BUT GREENVILLE'S climate is not simply a matter of its wages, its level of unionization, or its taxes. The health of a business climate also has to do with a way of life, a style of living. A captain of industry in Greenville is guaranteed that he won't have to put up with the headaches that make the life of an executive such an unending trial in other parts of the country—troublesome reporters, egghead intellectuals, antibusiness politicians. Greenville offers a different kind of life to harassed executives—respectful reporters, complimentary academics, worshipful politicians. And it's a climate where businesses look out for one another, where companies work like a team to keep unions and other troublemakers far away.

For businessmen tired of muckraking exposés and antibusiness diatribes, Greenville's electronic media are a welcome relief. Instead of "60 Minutes" style confrontation, an executive will find a community in which the only major television network outlet once demanded that two local women broadcasters change their surnames to the names of the most venerated corporate giants in Greenville—Furman and Daniel, names revered for the realty and construction empires, respectively. "It was no accident," commented the station's news director on the name changes. "Furman and Daniel are familiar and easy names in Greenville."

Nor are the print media a problem. Both of Greenville's newspapers are owned by Multimedia, a large media conglomerate built by the late J. Kelly Sisk, a man who defined the Greenville papers' constituency a couple of years ago as "advertisers, merchants, stores where newspapers are bought and sold"—rather different from the majority of newspapers obsessed with some notion of readers as their constituency. And it wasn't just J. Kelly Sisk. The editor of one paper's editorial page is "a good ole boy you can count on," relates a textile magnate confidently. "The basic policy is, 'keep your eyes closed,'" says a reporter. "It's not an explicit policy, but it's implicit."

And thank heavens, Greenville doesn't have those nutty college intellectuals who are always so critical of business. Greenville has its colleges, all right. There's Furman University, a college that tries to project an image of a broad-minded institution where conflicting ideas are freely debated. But no need to worry. In 1977 the School for Continuing Education offered a seminar on "Practical Collective Bargaining," taught by National Labor Relations Board arbitrators. That idea was pretty foreign to Greenville, and the reaction was swift. "We caught a little flak from Mr. Furman about doing it," recalled the dean, even though "we felt that, as a liberal arts institution, we were justified." By 1978 the school had learned its lesson and was offering the kind of seminar that wouldn't bring any flak from Mr. Furman—"Maintaining Non-Union Status."

The other colleges in and near Greenville aren't much to worry about either. At nearby Clemson, one bright young history professor learned just how to make it in a healthy business climate: "If you don't mind unions, and if you like your job, you learn to shut up. And if you hate unions, letting people know about it is a good way to advance your career." Greenville's two other institutions of higher learning are Bob Jones University, a fundamentalist training center for hundreds of missionaries and ministers where sermons regularly condemn unions and government-supported welfare as "un-Christian," and Greenville Technical Educational College, a school that exists solely to serve local businesses by feeding them trained labor.

GREENVILLE'S businesses are something of a family, knit closely together by their fervent desire to keep unions—and businesses that tolerate unions—far from Greenville. Such cooperation is a tradition in Greenville. "There's a long history of local interests, textile interests, encouraging or discouraging new industry," notes a Greenville road construction magnate. "The mills that were here controlled the water commission. . . . The water commission would say, 'I'm sorry, we don't have enough water.' It was the prerogative of the good ole boys in the courtroom."

Though the methods have changed somewhat, the tradition continues, ensuring that the sunny business climate will cloud for any newcomer that might bring a chink in the anti-union wall. In 1977, for example, Philip Morris announced that it had bought an option on land near Greenville as a possible site for a $100 million plant that would employ an estimated 2,500 workers. Several bankers were anxious to have Philip Morris, with its huge payroll and purchasing power, come into the area. But many of Greenville's corporate heavyweights, alarmed by Philip Morris's contract with the Tobacco Workers' Union in its North Carolina plants, came out swinging. "It would be like inviting the devil into the dining room," noted one executive who advised others to "run those bastards off." "The industrial climate of South Carolina is based on nonunionization," explained a leading Greenville lawyer.

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"If Philip Morris were here with unionized workers and families, this would no longer be a non-union community." Philip Morris moved elsewhere.

A corporate executive also needn't worry about being challenged by Greenville's politicians. There's absolutely no grandstanding against business. Instead, enthusiastic support for Greenville's current economic climate is shared by politicians across the board, from the state senator with the "Stamp Out Poverty—Get Rich Quick" sign on his door to Max Heller, the city's reform-minded mayor from 1971 to 1979. A Jewish refugee from Austria who built a textile fortune before entering politics, Heller is considered one of Greenville's leading progressives and evidence that it's not really xenophobic. But Heller does not question the virtues of Greenville's business climate, and he's gone on to become chairman of the State Development Board. Heller states his views simply: "If our taxes were higher, we would have less development."

But what kind of development is it? What kind of a model is Greenville? There is a compelling argument suggesting that the kind of development that Greenville represents is seriously skewed development—skewed for the nation, for the state, and for Greenville itself.

THE WRITINGS of right-wing economists like Milton Friedman and William Simon might suggest that a business climate like Greenville's results in gains for the nation as a whole. In fact, Greenville's development, from a national perspective, is a zero-sum game, for it is based largely on luring industry from other regions. Rather than an explosion of new industry, Greenville's growth rests on a relocation of existing industry, or on expansion of existing industry into a new area (usually with ensuing closings in the old area). During the first 10 months of 1979, other states reported record losses of jobs while South Carolina proudly reported a record increase in jobs. Greenville's boon is Akron's doom. The situation has become one of "beggar thy neighbor" among and between states, a situation in which state and local governments fiercely vie for corporate favors. And even when companies relocate from overseas—for example, when Michelin moved into the Greenville area—the development is skewed, pitting governments against each other as "the last entrepreneurs," in Robert Goodman's words, and creating a process he described as one "in which the public takes enormous financial risks, while business surveys the willing suitors and moves freely to where the public risk-taking is greatest."

South Carolina is able to subsidize its business climate by drinking heavily from the federal trough. The state continues its flashy tax giveaways despite the fact that 17.2 percent of its population is below the poverty income level—the seventh biggest percentage in the nation. Meanwhile South Carolina has the sixth highest percentage of students in the federal school lunch program. Akron is footing the bill for South Carolina to raid its industries.

That South Carolina continues to have serious unmet social needs is clear, and it is why the state's development can be said to be seriously skewed. South Carolina is 48th in per capita income, 47th in average hourly earnings. This may look appealing to a business executive, but it doesn't look so good at the supermarket. People in South Carolina work hard and stay poor. There's an old myth that the cost of living is lower in the south. It's entirely fallacious. The Department of Commerce reports that the southern states currently have the highest cost of living in the US. South Carolina has the second highest illiteracy rate in the nation, and it ranks 44th in teachers' salaries and 48th in student/teacher ratio. It is 42nd in the number of hospital beds per thousand and 47th in per capita welfare assistance. The revenues from the regressive four percent retail sales tax are used entirely for the public schools and are a major source of income for the state.

These are some examples of the ways in which South Carolina's refusal to tax more heavily means that the brunt of that development is being borne by the poor and the working poor. And, although Max Heller and Governor Dick Riley, to their credit, have committed themselves to targeting impoverished areas for new development, the refusal to tax the corporate wealth in other areas of the state means that the burden of development will continue to be borne by those least able to afford it.

Finally, there's a skewed development within Greenville itself. Greenville continues to spend relatively little on its public schools, even though it has more money available than the rest of the state. The Greenville County Planning Commission put it succinctly a couple of years ago: "outlays per pupil in Greenville County are approximately the same as those in the state of South Carolina as a whole, even though income per capita is 15 percent greater." There are other indications of deep frustrations within Greenville. In 1970, for example, Greenville had the third highest murder rate in the nation. But, most of all, it is impossible to claim that Greenville's workers are "free to choose," as Milton Friedman might put it. Any exposure to unions, or to the very concept of "Practical Collective Bargaining," has been carefully excluded from Greenville's controlled climate. And it is for this reason that almost nobody, on either side, expects Greenville's 18 J. P. Stevens mills to be in the least bit affected by the recent settlement. "Norma Rae" will not win here. Greenville's unionization level will continue to be a source of joy and pride to its corporate overseers.

This is not to say that Greenville's workers have reaped no benefits from its style of development. There are more manufacturing jobs in the area now, and the companies that have flocked to Greenville in the last decade pay two to three times the salaries the

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textile industry has been paying. But the development has had an underside—for the nation, the state, and the community.

That reality is rarely explored in Greenville. These are not the kinds of questions one sees on Greenville's TV, or in its newspapers. They're not the kinds of issues discussed in Greenville's universities, or by its politicians. No, in Greenville the concerns confronting a newcomer are of a different magnitude. "One of the questions I'm always asked," reflects a Greenville businessman on his experience peddling the charms of the Greenville climate, "is 'can I get a man into a golf club?' It's extremely important." For the record, he usually can.

Cliff Sloan

Cliff Sloan is a congressional aide and a contributor to *Working Lives*, to be published this month by Pantheon.

Foggy Bottom breakdown.

Foreign Service Blues

Of all the problems with the Foreign Service, and Foreign Service officers recite a remarkably uniform list of complaints, the most intractable is that Foreign Service officers are required to spend so much time in places that are foreign.

The lure of joining the Foreign Service and seeing the world has been somewhat tarnished of late by the development that the world doesn't particularly care to see the Foreign Service. And while there exist many third world posts that offer a colonial style of living—it's a Service axiom that to forgo servants means damaging the local economy—good help that's easy to find doesn't make up for the fact that, frankly, it's boring out there.

The result of these developments, only a few of the problems on the complaint list, is that today the most sought after Foreign Service assignment is Washington, DC. Considering that a Washington stay means no housing allowance (and paying rent out of one's own pocket is looked upon as the grossest of infringements), this shows just how unappealing foreign service in the Foreign Service has become.

One of the major causes for the erosion of the FS career, according to FS officers, columnists, and sociologists, has been the invention of the telephone and the jet airplane. These breakthroughs have meant that the field officer no longer has the authority to act as the representative of the United States without having to clear every adjective uttered with the State Department. Today if the State Department wants something done, well, it can just get on the phone and say what to do. And if things really get interesting, let's say in a treaty negotiation, then someone from Washington can just shuttle out and negotiate. All of this tends to reduce officers to feeling like mere messengers.

The obvious solution to this sense of worthlessness has been for officers to go where the power is. If you're young and ambitious it makes sense to attach yourself to an important decision-maker in Washington, where you'll likely be noticed. One young FS officer, now acting as a State Department special assistant after a single European tour, cringes at the thought of her next foreign assignment. "I'm not in any hurry to go overseas," she says. "The jobs are more interesting here. You're in your own environment, your own culture. But I can only stay in Washington a little while longer. Everyone wants to stay, so they're making the rules about that stricter." Washington jobs also offer the delightfully amorphous duties of policy analysis and special projects in contrast to the specific drudgery of most junior officer field jobs.

The consequences of Mr. Bell's and the Wright Brothers' achievements are not the only reasons for the decline of the FS. Cultural changes have had their effect. The number of officers' spouses (yes, usually wives, even today) who gladly pack up and troop off to various corners of the world every two years is diminishing. That sort of schedule is bad for one's own career. In addition, the necessity for affirmative action programs has struck hard at the Service. In spite of everything, the Service takes comfort in the conviction that it is the elite of all government workers; you really have to know a lot to pass the initial written exam. The fact that minority candidates can skip the exam or pass at a lower score than whites does not sit well. The muckamucks' awkward handling of the affirmative action problem raises another of the FS officers' complaints: that the State Department is presiding over the dismembering of the Service.

An example, they say, is the advertisement a while ago in the *Wall Street Journal* for applicants for assistant secretary of state. Now, officers feel, it's one thing for the Service to have to put up with the practice of presidents rewarding cronies of varying competence with ambassadorships—the ultimate plum in the FS career. But it's another for the State Department to deliberately seek political appointees when the Service is loaded with deserving and frustrated souls who've been getting dengue fever, visa-stamping cramps, and shot at for 20 years in the field.

Surprisingly, the issue of the hostages doesn't come up often in conversations concerning the problems with the Service. The Iranian situation is cited as another example of the heightened dangers diplomats face, but for now it's considered isolated in its extremity. Applications have been down recently, but the FS still gets about 10,000 candidates for the 250 slots it fills yearly to keep a total of about 3,600 FS officers.

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In FS parlance, one enters one of four career "cones": administrative, consular, political, or economic. Functions are described as cones because, if you remember your junior high school teacher's diagram of a bureaucracy, there's room at the bottom for many, but place at the top for few. As in the military, those who don't make steady progress up find themselves on the way out.

In the field the administrative officer is responsible for embassy housekeeping: making sure the motor pool runs, the commissary is stocked, visiting members of Congress are stroked. The consular officer takes care of visas and wandering Americans in trouble. The political officer analyzes and reports on the politics of the host country, which includes making contact with local leaders. The economic officer monitors, obviously, the host country's economics.

Ending up in the administrative and consular cones often leaves people feeling like flight attendants; you do get to see the world, but most of the time you're dishing out meals. As a series of portraits of obscure posts in the Department of State newsletter shows, even though an FS officer in Vientiane had Souvanna Phouma as a bridge partner, the bureaucratic nature of one's life is hard to escape. In Mali, for example, one administrative officer speaks glowingly of the post's challenges—which include supplying electricity to the American compound in a country where candle-power is the norm. "Professionally this is the best thing that ever happened to me," he says.

But what's good for the career is not necessarily good for the psyche. One administrative officer, who left the FS for a Civil Service State Department job after one Washington and one European assignment, says he realized no foreign post would have duties as interesting as in Washington. "I had to ask myself if I wanted to go from post to post, doing the same sort of housekeeping work over and over," he says. His answer was no.

POLITICAL AND economic officers are considered on the inside track for career ambassadorships—to the resentment of their colleagues. This doesn't mean that they're happy. The problem for these officers is that they have more power than those in the other two cones. So the apparently ineluctable erosion of the FS's mandate hits them hardest. When Washington isn't dictating the embassy's every move, then Washington often doesn't care. And political officers can tell you what a shrinking world we live in. "It used to be that what a political officer wrote about a country and sent back was unique," says one FS officer. "For example, the reports from China during the revolution. Now there are reporters everywhere sending back information to the public at large."

In spite of this, the Service maintains that it is vital to keep some level of American representation in the world, particularly since America doesn't have the authority it once did. If there is trouble, they say, it is essential to have people with first-hand knowledge of the countries we're dealing with. But if the political officers' product is no longer unique, at least it is voluminous. The State Department receives more than one million cables a year from its worldwide posts—a figure that increases about 10 percent a year. And what is all this tonnage saying? Apparently not much. "It's so noticeable when a good report comes in," sighs an officer responsible for reading them.

The economic officer's job has become increasingly important of late. So important, in fact, that most of its functions were stripped from State early last year and given to the Commerce Department during one of a series of bureaucratic turf wars State has a talent for losing. FS officers complain that Commerce would not have been allowed to develop a cadre of commercial officers if Kissinger still had been at the helm. But others admit that the commercial function wasn't taken away because Commerce was jealous of what a great job State was doing with it.

IN ADDITION to the Commerce Department coup, in 1978 the FS's education and cultural duties were transferred to the International Communication Agency. Along with that, the establishment of the special trade representative and the increasing influence of the National Security Council leave FS officers muttering that the State Department doesn't stand up for its own. The muttering has been noticeably ineffective as a way to stop the power drain, but it does help reinforce that delicious feeling of self-pity. "The Department doesn't fight battles well," says one officer. "Managers here think turf fights are unseemly, so we lose more battles than we should."

"One of my friends in the Service says we won't exist in 10 years," says another officer. "We're going to make ourself obsolete by bad personnel policy and giving away our power."

FS veterans say State Department personnel policy is a little like New England weather—if you don't like it, wait a minute, it will change. Even the director of personnel, Ambassador Harry Barnes Jr., admits management failings. "At interagency meetings State tended to be represented by people who couldn't agree among themselves on State Department policy."

If the FS has been unable to stanch its draining power, it at least does a good job of keeping tabs on it, and the slights inflicted upon the profession. One former officer observes that the FS in many ways resembles graduate school: it's full of bright people who are better at criticizing than anything else.

In the midst of the criticizing, the FS looks with some optimism toward two recent occurrences. One is the passage of the first new Foreign Service Act in 34 years. The other is the election of Ronald Reagan.

The act does not address the pervasive sense of purposelessness, but it does formalize grievance procedures, clarify promotion and training schedules, deal with some FS family issues, and increase pay. As is the

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case with many government employees, who claim their skills would be worth six figures on the open market but perversely decline to obtain such private compensation, FS officers are not fully satisfied with the pay package. One candidly admits that since he doesn't see any way to stop the Service's eclipse, more money and perks are the only realistic way to shore up sagging morale. The bill also defines what FS officers mean when they say they are "worldwide available"—and it had better mean they are available for Georgetown, Guyana, and well as Georgetown, District of Columbia.

It's ironic that the State Department, with its reputation for being less hard-line than the National Security Council, should look forward so avidly to the Reagan administration. But there is the feeling that things under Reagan will be different, and couldn't possibly be worse. There is also the hope that perhaps Reagan really means it when he says he wants to see State reclaim its primary role in foreign policy. That sort of promise prompts visions of a return to glory dancing in some officers' heads. Days of past glory that didn't exist in the 1950s era of McCarthyism, or in the 1960s with the ruinous effect of Vietnam, or in the 1970s, which saw the further emasculation of State. But you can't blame anyone for hoping.

Emily Yoffe

Emily Yoffe is a Washington writer.

Primaries have ruined our politics.

Democracy vs. Elections

by Michael Walzer

Something is wrong with the way we choose presidents. I don't just mean that something went wrong in 1980. Something is structurally wrong. Columnists and editorial writers have been full of complaints. The process goes on too long, they say. It takes too much money, or more money than the candidates can raise legally. Running for president is incompatible with doing anything else, and so unemployed politicians have an advantage, even if they are unemployed for good reasons. A narrow victory in a small state where few people bother to vote makes too much of a difference. All these are justified complaints, but they don't get at the root of the matter, which is simply that the primary system is a disaster. Primaries are indeed a way of sorting out candidates, but they systematically leave us with the worst ones. Why?

Ostensibly, primaries are the democratic way of choosing candidates, and the fight for more primaries and for open primaries (in which people can vote for either Republican or Democratic candidates) has been a democratic fight. Once the voters could only choose between two candidates, themselves chosen by party bosses. Now, many reforms later, they choose among a large number; every would-be president in the country is running, men and women with serious ambitions, single-issue candidates, politicians speculating on the future. The people have broken into the innermost citadel of the parties; there are no back rooms left for the bosses. The reform movement has been driven by a simple creed: the more primaries, the more participants, the more democracy. If the resulting process is exhausting, then we can simplify it and make it even more democratic by eliminating the states with their uneven populations and uneven political effects, and establishing regional or national primaries. This would only make things worse. But the problem is not too much democracy.

The defenders of primaries never have come to grips with the requirements of a party system, even of a party system as attenuated as ours is (or was, for now it is not so much attenuated as disintegrated). Democratic politics generated parties for a reason. The purpose of a party system is to provide us with candidates who represent a certain set of interests, not some random, self-selected portion of the general electorate. Its purpose is also to provide us with candidates whose positions are widely and dependably known and who are likely to stand by those positions because they are tied into a stable network of commitments and alliances. A democracy needs candidates of this sort, or the election loses all political form, and degenerates into a public relations contest. And only candidates like this can govern effectively. Only candidates who have support within their party and who can mobilize its members, both during and after the campaign, can attempt serious political initiatives once they are in

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office (or, out of office, lead an effective opposition).

If this is right, then the candidates must be chosen by the active members and the local and national leaders of the party. After that the citizens as a whole, those who have been involved in the nominating process and those who have not, choose between (or among) the parties and their leaders rather than among some assortment of would-be leaders. Leaders come with labels attached, testifying to their commitments and associates. The citizens act, then, exactly as President Carter, in the last week of his campaign, asked the American people to act: pay attention, he told us, to my party label. But he had not been chosen by any such process as I have just described, and hardly looked like a Democrat. Nor did any of us have any clear sense of how he would act if reelected.

American parties always were loosely organized, the national organization little more than an alliance of state parties, urban machines, national and local notables, and so on, most often without a strong center. Still, it makes sense to say that there once were parties—parties capable of sustaining loyalty. Sometimes the local organizations were run by local tyrants, party bosses who ruled by patronage and corruption and turned the courts and the police into partisan weapons. But there also are examples of democratically integrated and disciplined parties—the Democratic (Farmer-Labor) parties of Wisconsin and Minnesota, for example, which produced a succession of politicians who were (mostly) faithful party men and women, and among the most attractive recent American leaders.

SOMETIMES, at least, the party provided a local presence, a place to work, a source of services. And beyond that, there was some sort of articulated structure reaching toward the national level, so that one might hope that attending a ward committee meeting was an act not totally meaningless in terms of the politics of the country as a whole. The leaders of the ward had connections among the leaders of the city, and they in turn were connected to state leaders, who had connections in Washington. No doubt it never worked quite like that, or not only like that. American politics always has had room for celebrities, coteries, informal alliances. But the party provided one network, however rough and ready, for choosing and controlling political leaders and for mobilizing followers. The very existence of bosses testified that there was something of value to be had through party organization. Where there was a boss, there was something to be hoped for by his overthrow. But today there is hardly any party organization at all, nothing to be bossed, nothing to be taken over by citizen-reformers.

The decline of party in the United States antedates the recent upsurge in primary democracy. It has many causes, which I cannot take up here. But the new centrality of primaries in the selection of presidential candidates clearly has accelerated the decline. Once primaries are established, and especially once open primaries are established, the state and local organizations lose their hold. The candidate makes his appeal not through an articulated structure but through the mass media. He doesn't negotiate with local leaders, speak to caucuses, form alliances with established interest groups. Instead, he solicits votes, as it were, one by one. And he solicits votes among all the registered voters, without regard to their attachment to the party, interest in or loyalty to its programs, or willingness to work for its success. In turn, the voters encounter the candidate only in their living rooms, on the television screen, without political mediation. Voting itself is lifted out of the context of parties and platforms. It is more like impulse buying than political decision-making. The expert in advertising is the most important adviser a candidate can have.

A PRIMARY campaign is like a raid. The candidate and his personal entourage, together with a few attached professionals, make-up artists for the face and mind, descend upon a state. No local ties are necessary. The endorsement of state notables is of little importance; increasingly it only demonstrates the weakness or disconnection of the notables themselves. Money is crucial, and so is the kind of organization that might be put together for any advertising campaign. What seems to me dangerous about all this is not that I don't know the candidate who invades my state in search of my vote: people like me never knew him. What is dangerous is that no one that I know knows him. We have no firm expectations as to how he will behave once in office. We have no way of enforcing whatever expectations—pious hopes, leaps of faith—we allow ourselves. For it is not his party loyalty, his stand on issues, his ties to other politicians (whose support he will need later on) that count, but only his "personality"—the image he projects, the mask he wears.

Television debates, it is now clear, make all this much worse, both at the primary and then at the electoral level. The candidates stand before us as individuals in a contest, not as spokesmen for factions, parties, or interests. The format of the debate and the necessary time constraints of state or national television virtually preclude serious discussion of the issues. We are invited, again, to focus on images: how the candidates look; how much they sweat; how confident, calm, and cool they appear to be. And the nature of the contest makes every slip of the tongue so dangerous and every candidate so careful that these television spectaculars are unutterably boring, a profound discouragement from politics. I would prefer a torchlight parade to a television debate: at least I would learn something about the candidate from the men and women with whom he chooses to march.

This description of the primary process fits most closely, I suppose, the Carter campaign of 1976, the seizure of the Democratic party by the gang from

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Georgia. But it also helps explain the success of Senator McGovern, who grasped the possibilities of the new system before anyone else, and of Ronald Reagan, the perfect media candidate and harbinger of things to come. And it suggests some of the reasons for the persistent disappointments of well-established party leaders: Humphrey, Muskie, Jackson, Bayh, Baker, and so on—the sorts of men who might have been chosen had the choice been left up to their colleagues and peers.

How should the choice be made? I am not a political engineer, and it may be that I shall manage to express only a certain hankering for an older form of democracy, inappropriate to a mass society and insufficiently accessible to the mass media. But it is worth asserting as a fundamental principle that parties and countries are different sorts of organizations and that their leaders should be chosen by different procedures and by different groups of people. The leaders of the country should be chosen by its citizens: here the goal is the largest possible participation of informed men and women. The leaders of the party should be chosen by a much smaller group: here the goal is to represent those men and women who are actually tied to the party and who play some part in its life between elections. American parties are not, and are most unlikely to be turned into, membership organizations. They are unlikely, that is, to become parties on the European model. It makes no sense, then, to propose primaries or caucuses limited to party members. In general, closed primaries, in which only registered Democrats, say, can vote for Democratic candidates, are better than open primaries. And caucuses, in which some further token of commitment is required—namely, a willingness to come to a meeting—are better than primaries of any sort. But the preferred procedure, it seems to me, at both the state and national level, is the old-fashioned party convention.

I MEAN THE party convention with all its festive and ritual character as well as its deep political purpose—with its convention floor and its back rooms, too. Ideally two different groups of people should be present at the convention: party activists, chosen in precinct, town, and city caucuses; and elected officials, councillors, mayors, governors, representatives, and senators. (In the Democratic party it probably would make sense to find some way of representing labor unions too, though their members might do well enough in the caucuses.) Since the activists tend to be overbalanced toward the left among the Democrats, or toward the right among the Republicans, the elected officials provide a kind of ballast. They represent a larger constituency and are sensitive to the requirements of electoral, as well as of ideological, politics. On the other hand, the activists embody the possibility of party rebellions against elected officials, even against a standing president. It is important to keep that possibility open if the rule of bosses is to be avoided. In the recent past, it has been the primary system that has enabled ambitious politicians or candidates committed on some issue or set of issues to challenge a standing president: thus McCarthy in 1968 and Kennedy in 1980. These were dramatic moments in the history of the Democratic party. But though I was a supporter of both challengers, I am not inclined to say that the primary system provided Democrats with the best chance actually to debate the isues or to find their way to a resolution that served the interests of the party (or the country) as a whole. Open caucuses at the local level and open conventions at the state and national level might well have been better.

OF COURSE, the conventions must be open—not in the sense that anyone can attend, but in the sense that delegates are not bound in advance to vote for any particular candidate. The debate over this issue at the last Democratic convention was a wonderful piece of collective idiocy, not least because both sides had a perfectly valid point. It makes no sense to have primaries if the elected delegates can ignore the results. It makes no sense to have conventions if the delegates are nothing more than automatons, beyond the reach of argument and negotiation. But if both these propositions are true, then we have to conclude that it makes no sense to have primaries. For argument and negotiation are the very essence of any intelligible political process. What ought to happen at a convention is that the leaders and activists of the party, responsible to different groups within it, meet and argue about issues and personalities, about running a successful campaign and exercising power after that. They bargain over issues and offices. Some of this should go on in public; some of it shouldn't. That is not because the bargains are necessarily sordid but simply because they are bargains. The men and women who work them out need a chance to explain them to their supporters—and to put the best possible color on them too—before they are broadcast to the country at large. They know that the argument will be renewed another time, but they are prepared not to say that in public for the sake of the celebrations on the floor and the coming campaign.

A convention is a mixture—a politic mixture—of publicity and concealment, festival and negotiation. I don't doubt that it can go badly sometimes, but one possible result is a candidate capable of rallying the party and committed to behave in a certain ways, to press certain policies, if he wins. In primaries, by contrast, there can be no mixture. Everything goes on in public, and so the candidate is a public relation—really related, that is, to no one. We have aimed at a perfectly transparent political process, and the result is that we are ruled by masked men and movie actors. We need a process within which real people can function, within which policies can be worked out and alliances forged before the election itself—so that when we finally vote we have some firm sense of what we are doing.

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Mixed Blessings

Roman Polanski's *Tess* begins beautifully. The camera is high over the Wessex landscape (shot in Normandy actually), then pulls back slowly, comes down, and picks up a lane running toward us at an angle. From afar a small procession approaches slowly up the lane—musicians leading a group of girls in white, bearing branches. They pass by us, close, and as the camera turns to follow them, it then picks up a farm laborer coming along a road that joins that lane. The camera stays with him and soon picks up a horseman ambling toward him. It's a "sequence shot" in the best Renoir tradition. The two flowing movements, of the people and of the camera, combine to begin the story at the heart of its milieu, with a suggestion of ballad, with a sense of the coursing of narrative, of fate.

And in camera choices and movements, the film continues beautifully. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* has, in those terms, brought out the best in Polanski since *Knife in the Water*, his first feature. *Tess* has the same strong simplicity, the same inviting compositions, the same contained intensities, with none of the trickery and failed meretriciousness (the worst kind) of much of his intervening work. Polanski had some perception of the rhythms of Hardy's tragedy and has respected his own perception.

The picture is not a failure. I put it that way because it isn't a success and I don't want to make it seem a disaster. But, without being tedious or trifling, it falls short. The trouble is not that the screenplay, by Gerard Brach and Polanski and John Brownjohn, omits and compresses a great deal: that was inevitable. In fact, it's surprising how much this film, at a mere 170 minutes, retains. The trouble lies elsewhere.

First, the casting. Lovely Nastassia Kinski, daughter of the celebrated Klaus Kinski, is credible, but it's not quite Tess that she's credible as, it's a different character. Oddly, she seems to fit Hardy's description: "a fine, handsome girl—not handsomer than some others, certainly" (Polanski doesn't make her the one swan among crows), with a "mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes." But her temperament and flavor are very much more Brontë than Hardy. No conviction of being rooted in the earth comes from her, though we often see her laboring; and thus the killing of Alec seems more of a boulevard scandal than the result of primal forces working through a natural woman. Peter Firth, as Angel Clare—a character name that ranks in daring with Dickens's Rosa Bud—is hopeless: a petty face further diminished by whiskers, a presence of no impress, a figure of nullity. Firth is additionally vitiated because so many of the faces and performances in small roles around him are trenchant. Leigh Lawson, as Alec, is adequate but without much depth.

(Still, Lawson is good enough to revive my qualms about Alec. Certainly he seduced Tess with brutal egotism; but certainly he didn't know that she became pregnant and, when he found out, he helped her and her family in real remorse. Then, when Tess wants to rejoin Angel, she murders Alec: not because she couldn't just leave him if she chose but to purge herself in her own and Angel's eyes. It does seem a bit hard on Alec.)

And there's the trouble that recurs in films of great literature: no cinematic equivalent for the prose. I cite, again, a successful example: Eric Rohmer's *The Marquise of O.*, which in its texture achieves a metamorphosis of Kleist's texture, thus gives the film a vertical as well as horizontal being. But Polanski has merely extracted Hardy's story, much of it anyway, from Hardy's novel, as one might extract the plot of a thriller. One result is that the major transitional moments don't hold. The wonderful density of Hardy's writing, its complexity, its almost palpable "feel," create the world in which his story's events find their existence. But the texture of Polanski's film doesn't support some key moments: when Angel cannot accept Tess's past and leaves her; when he returns after some years and expects to be welcomed; when she joins him at last and tells him she has killed Alec. These moments seem either stuffy or slightly comic because, without a prose-equivalent film texture, they are pressed against *our* standards of behavior instead of the standards in that world.

The cinematography by the late Geoffrey Unsworth and Ghislain Cloquet doesn't help. It's so gorgeous that it heightens the romantic feeling generated by Kinski. There is a paradox in Hardy's depiction of Wessex. His drama is hard, but his prose is not. Hardy's land pulses. ("Amid the oozing fatness and warm ferments of the Froom Vale, at a season when the rush of juices could almost be heard below the hiss of fertilization, it was impossible that the most fanciful love should not grow passionate.") But it is not merely pictorial. Two summers ago I spent a few days in

Films Worth Seeing

Every Man for Himself. Godard returns, still iconoclastic, irritating, irreplaceable. His latest attack on conventional narrative is through a triangle story.

From the Life of the Marionettes. Ingmar Bergman, working in German, trying to understand some great questions. Answers are for lesser artists.

Kagemusha. Akira Kurosawa in the wars of 16th-century Japan. A genius at his not-quite best, still magnificent.

Raging Bull. A furious, energy-packed chunk of animal hungers, disguised as the life of a boxer. Robert De Niro and Martin Scorsese collaborate excellently.

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Dorset, which is most of Hardy's Wessex, three miles from Marnhull, which is Tess's Marlott; and, no doubt influenced by Hardy's vision, I saw that wonderful countryside as *living*—busy in its thriving and its cycles—rather than as a set of postcards. Polanski and his cinematographers show some rough farm work, but when they look at the countryside, it becomes picturesque, which is not how the characters often see it or what the tragedy needs.

Polanski is better with cycles of narrative than of earth. For instance, when Alex first gives Tess lunch in the lawn tent, he cuts a slice off a ham with a large carving knife. Years later, when she comes up to their rooms in the seaside place, after seeing the returned Angel, Alex is at breakfast, with a ham and a knife just visible in the frame—the knife she then presumably uses to kill him. It's Polanski's devising, and it's good.

He ends the film at Stonehenge where the police catch up with the fugitive Tess and Angel. A next-to-last shot of the sun rising behind the ancient ruins gives us the implied sacrifice of a victim on a culture's altar. But there is no mention of her subsequent trial and execution, and thus we miss what may be the most terrible line in Hardy—after her execution—which could have been spoken or inscribed: "'Justice' was done, and the President of the Immortals . . . had ended his sport with Tess." The absence of that line, or at least its idea, is typical of what saps the film, for all its merits.

Coincidentally, another purged work by a trickster-director. With his last five pictures, Robert Altman has seemed high on ego dust, supplied by pusher-critics. When I read that he was to make a film of the old comic strip, *Popeye*, I tensed. The news that Jules Feiffer would write the script didn't relax me much, in view of Feiffer's half-baked plays.

The result is another film that's not a success but not a dismal failure, either. Altman's directing is shorn of glitz: no flashy editing of picture and sound, no busy zoomings, no mockery of his people. He has simply tried to narrate a story through his characters. (There are some songs, harmless.)

And his casting is good. If I say that Shelley Duvall was born to play Olive Oyl, I confirm my past reservations about her, I think; but since she *is* playing it here, she's good in it. Robin Williams, of "Mork and Mindy," mutters along amusingly as the hero. Ray Walston (his father), Paul L. Smith (Bluto), and Paul Dooley (Wimpy) are all good.

What's wrong is the idea of making the film at all. As everyone knows, comic strips come in two kinds: those that are not at all comic, like "Prince Valiant," which are drawn realistically, and those like "Popeye," which are cartooned. Live-action film, perfectly comfortable with the first, has trouble with the second. Sometimes cartoon characters played by actors can work—I remember loving the film of "Harold Teen" in 1928. But even "Harold Teen" was more lifelike than "Popeye." With this film, I kept asking all the wrong questions. The relatively realistic camera made me wonder why Olive Oyl wore shoes like that and where she got them, what was wrong with Popeye's swollen forearms, and so on. The images of the graphic artist didn't translate into photography.

So Feiffer's script is in a trap. The story is limp and trickly, yet it can't be stronger because greater strength would involve more credible characters; and there are no characters, only cartoons with characteristics. In the 1920s and 1930s the Fleischer brothers made good "Popeye" cartoon shorts and one near-feature. This new one should have been a cartoon feature if it was going to be done at all (an imperative I don't share). But Altman's hands are, for a change, clean.

Russian Avant-Garde art at the Hirshhorn.

A Lost Generation

by Marina Vaizey

The art market and art scholars only recently have turned their attention to the Russian art of the earlier part of the 20th century, perhaps the first socially conscious, openly didactic group of artists to work together to affect their own society. And only this year, and in America, has the most substantial exhibition devoted exclusively to the Russian achievement taken place: *The Avant-Garde in Russia, 1910-1930: New Perspectives*. This is an exhaustive, exhilarating collection of over 450 works, including paintings, drawings, watercolors, photographs, constructions, reconstructions, books, documents, designs, environments, and models, by 40 artists working in Russia during the period. These artists, both theoreticians and pragmatists, thought art could change the world. Most of them fervently embraced the revolution, a burst of creative energy shared by other creative Russians during the decades leading up to 1917, as Russia awoke from her long, isolated slumbers. Their subsequent careers epitomize the tragic ironies of the 20th century. Utopia remained on the drawing board, literally in this case. The proposed buildings, for example, Tatlin's Monument to the Third International, which would have rivaled the Eiffel Tower, were not built, for economic and later for ideological reasons. Some artists died young, others compromised, still others died in Siberia; some survived in the West. Some flourished, transplanted, like Naum Gabo; others sank into penury and ill-deserved obscurity, such as the wondrous couple, Mikhail Larionov and Natalia Goncharova.

The heroic period of their art recently has come under scrutiny in a series of official mixed exhibitions in Europe. These include the Council of Europe's mammoth *Trends of the Twenties* (1977), itself housed with appropriate irony in Le Corbusier's glass museum in West Berlin, with no loans from the Eastern bloc; *Paris-Moscow* at the Beaubourg, officially named, of course, the Centre Georges Pompidou, in Paris (1979), a show drastically distorted by the need to ensure Russian cooperation; and *Abstraction 1910-1920* at the Tate Gallery, London (1980), which put the Russian innovations in painting at the heart of things.

Lady Vaizey is the art critic for the London *Sunday Times*.

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These artists have been a lost generation. The problem of seeing the period clearly is made difficult and complex for two practical reasons. In Russia itself, the advanced art of the early period is officially ignored and not on public view. In the West much has emerged, but some may come from doubtful sources. The present exhibition first was seen this summer at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, organized by Stephanie Barron and Maurice Tuchman of that museum, with the collaboration of a host of scholars and with all the material from Western sources. Now the exhibition is at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, DC, through February 15, 1981.

The salient characteristics that emerge from this scintillating survey of

"Constructed Head No. 2" (1916) by Naum Gabo.

Russian art include energy, optimism, and faith in the limitless possibilities offered by technology. Sounds like a litany of those characteristics that are listed when America comes to mind. Even the roles of the artists seemed limitless: writing, making objects, devising productions and street spectacles, and perhaps above all, teaching. Teaching and being taught, theorizing and being theorized about, the artists lived one vast extension course, conducted with high spirits. The artists were perfectly willing and more than ready to give their talents to the new order of society, and abstraction and non-objectivity in art had been accepted officially in the Tenth State Exhibition of State Art (1919).

The energy, enthusiasm, optimism, and high spirits are attractive. The fact that it all came to naught except for a few scraps that are now in museums or on the market can be ignored as we grant these artists high historic stature. The contradictions of the artists' own doomed futures and the passion for their work in the West now that history has safely neutralized their ambitions give further resonance to this amazing exhibition.

What we actually see is a series of works that moves from neo-primitive hotly colored representational portraits, similar to the art of the Fauves, to variations of extreme yet surprisingly opulent geometric abstraction. At the Hirshhorn we may begin to recognize not only those already known, but discover for the first time such artists as the teacher and designer Vera Ermolaeva (dead by her early 40s in Siberia). The exceptionally gifted Liubov Popova also died young. She was described as an "artist-constructor," and although her drawings, prints, and paintings by now are exceedingly well known to those whose passion is the avant-garde, a surprise in this exhibition is the realization of many of her superbly fresh dress designs. Vasilii Kandinsky, El Lissitzky are famous in the world of art: Ilya Chashnik, Alexei Morgunov, Olga Rozanova, let us say, are less so. This enterprising, continually fascinating show brings before us the known and the unknown, offering new perspectives on a time that was optimistic, poignant, and finally doomed.

Reconsideration: chronicler of the American rich.

John O'Hara's Long Concern

by Frank MacShane

The most enduring product of John O'Hara's last years as a novelist is *The Lockwood Concern*, which alone among his final novels has the status of serious work. It is the story of four generations of a Pennsylvania family that in the 19th century established itself and became rich and powerful in a town outside of Gibbsville. The history of the family begins in violence, for the Lockwoods were tough and ruthless, and money was linked with bloodshed. The founder of the family fortune, Moses Lockwood, kills a robber who was breaking into his room; then he shoots a man in the street who he thinks is a vengeful debtor trying to kill him. Lockwood always acts first; he is impulsive and unimpeded by thought. The family fortune is built on blood and the family's happiness is sacrificed to alliances that will build up the line. O'Hara concentrates the novel on George Lockwood, born in 1873, who represents the third generation. He benefits from the fortune gathered by his father and grandfather and he follows their ruthless methods in building up what he was left. "The Lockwoods took Swedish Haven by storm," Lockwood tells his daughter at the end of the novel. "The brute force known otherwise as the almighty dollar. And there was never anyone here that dared to oppose us."

The Lockwoods are never accepted, however, partly because of their small-town origins, partly because of the violence. This erupts once again in George's generation when his weak and amiable younger brother shoots his mistress and commits suicide in New York. Social ostracism increases the Lockwoods' sense of family solidarity, but it exacts a price from the individuals involved. George Lockwood is always planning. Nothing with him is spontaneous; he has no real pleasure in the present because he is always organizing the future. During his life he loves only one woman, but he never marries her; he never even knows what happiness is. With others in his circle he plays God, manipulating them for the good of the family or for what immediate pleasure they can give him. But his wives bore him, and except for sex, he abandons them as human beings. His mistresses are also objects for him, appendages to his own ego. Only his son escapes him, but in doing so he makes his father hate him. "He's wanted to be free of me, and now he is," says George Lockwood. "But anybody who wants to be free of me makes me want to be free of them."

O'Hara thought of *The Lockwood Con-*

(continued on page 24)

Frank MacShane teaches at Columbia University and is author of *The Life of Raymond Chandler* (Penguin).

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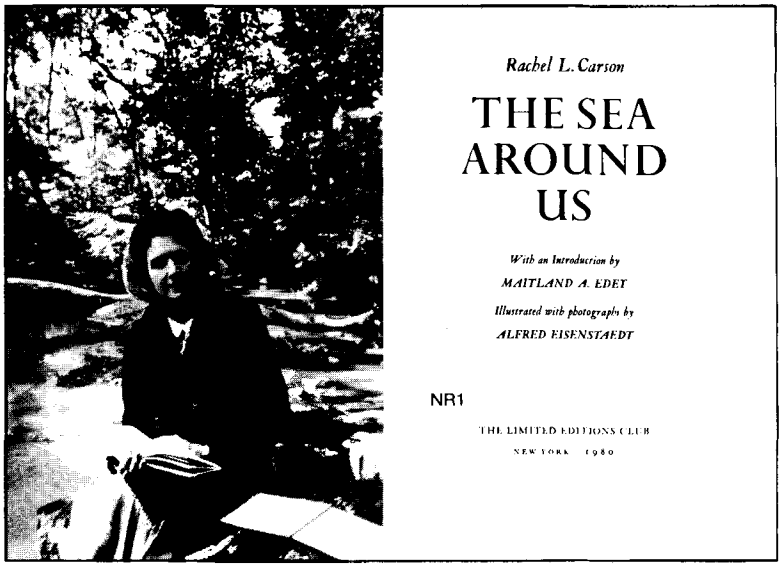

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cern as "an old-fashioned morality novel, as are all my longer novels." On the surface, the story of George Lockwood is clear enough in these terms, for O'Hara characterized Lockwood as "completely self-centered, enormously selfish, enjoyed life, in his way." The novel opens with Lockwood building a mansion in the country that symbolizes the family "concern," which is an attempt by the Lockwoods to establish an enduring family line in the manner of a European barony. Lockwood has his property enclosed by a high wall surmounted by spikes. On the day the house is ready for occupancy a small child falls from a tree and is impaled on one of the spikes. His death is matched by Lockwood's own, at the end of the novel, when Lockwood slips and falls down a secret staircase he had built in the center of the house. He is blinded by his fall and dies alone in the dark at the bottom of the stairs. O'Hara said he believed in the "Almighty system of checks and balances and compensations," so the secret staircase was "a symbol of Lockwood's secretiveness, withdrawal, superiority complex," and it gave O'Hara what he called an "instrument of retribution."

But the morality of art is always secondary. Morality tends to freeze art and force reality into patterns that are not necessarily true. *The Lockwood Concern* would hardly hold our attention if it were only a fable of punishment. Despite his comment on morality, O'Hara had too much respect for reality ever to want to preach. In George Lockwood he created a character who was individual and complex. Although he is hard and selfish and demanding, there is something admirable about him. He has the energy and the vitality that make him survive while his weak younger brother does not. He is representative of the American man of action without whom society would collapse. Had he been introspective, and thought of the human consequences of what he was doing, he probably would have become ineffectual. O'Hara was fond of quoting Joseph Conrad's remark from the foreword to *Victory*, that "thinking is the greatest enemy of perfection" insofar as it paralyzes "the readiness of mind and the turn of hand that come without reflection and lead the man to excellence in life, in art, in crime, in virtue and for the matter of that, even in love." So it is no use to say that Lockwood and other rich Americans should give up their pursuit of wealth and power. On the contrary, if they did so, they would be emasculated. O'Hara links the rise of the rich in America to the impulsive energy and ambition that set a man apart from, and usually above, his fellow men. As an artist O'Hara had undergone this experience in his own career. Fundamentally then, he is dealing not just with the acquisition or preservation of money, but with human values and the human price that must be paid for any individual act. That is the underlying theme of *The Lockwood Concern*.

John O'Hara at Linebrook by Martin D'Arcy. Photo from book.

Because he resisted simple moralizing, O'Hara was able to treat the rich people of his fiction with rare compassion and understanding. Having once been poor and resentful of the privileges of the rich and then having become rich and known what it was like to have money, he had a double vision that made it impossible for him to slip into the relatively easy stance of the satirist. He chose the harder task of trying to present the rich as people. Brendan Gill said of him, "O'Hara had a passion for the rich and well-born, which is not to say that he didn't see through them as well as into them." O'Hara was also forthright in his choice of subject: "I am fascinated by the rich and how they live, and I go with them every chance I get," he said. To do so was part of his social, as distinct from his artistic, ambition, and he was proud of his connections. But apart from the snobbery, he liked the rich as people "because they wear well and they don't feel any envy or hostility." He preferred the old rich—men and women

> whose fathers, at least, lived on the income of their income, the people who can buy anything but don't. You see a large band of them assembling at a wedding, for instance, and there is a wholesale display of politeness, a fair uniformity of attire among the men, and an exhibition of fashion among the women. If you, like me, are an outsider, for you they start conventional. But then you see a little more of them, and then still a little more, and then you begin to see the holes in the lining. Pretty soon you realize that the moths have been really industrious—and it's time you got so yourself, if you are a novelist.

He knew that although they were considerate and well-mannered, they had "their own private hells."

More than any of his contemporaries, O'Hara plunged into the complex social and economic world of the ruling classes of modern America and made it real in ways that no one had done before him. He went further than his predecessors because he was willing to reveal the underside of the life of the American rich that other writers fudged through ignorance or covered up through gentility. "I seem to be the only American author who gets around in these circles and over the years has observed the people in them," O'Hara observed in a letter.

> It is not easy to see them plain. Most of our authors never see them at all, and the few who do see them come ill prepared, with erroneous impressions created by

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> other authors either on the glamorous or downgrading side. Then there are the aristocrats' distorted views of themselves. . . . I suppose I am the only American author since Edith Wharton who has given these people a hard but not unsympathetic look, and it is my artistic duty to write what I have seen. And what I have seen is very discomforting for the future of an American aristocracy. Hell, it has no future. But as a group, or class, the aristocrats are generally easier to associate with, so long as they mind the manners they were taught in childhood and retain some of the early principles. And it is important to get down some record of them.

It took O'Hara longer to finish *The Lockwood Concern* than most of his other novels. At 60, he could "stay at the typewriter for four hours, but not six, and never again eight." He interrupted work on this book occasionally for other tasks and thought of making it longer, but in the end he sent the typescript to Random House as it was. When it was published, *The Lockwood Concern* was not well received. Certainly it did not get the attention it deserved, but that may be explained by the flood of other O'Hara books which had dulled the public's receptiveness to his work. Reviewers complained about its length, the social detail, its lack of vitality compared to novels set in the present, and its apparent misanthropy.

The Lockwood Concern is the fourth of a series of novels that attempt not only to create a fictional region representative of America in the 20th century, but also to study the American man of action during this period. From Sidney Tate in *A Rage to Live* onward, through Joseph Chapin and Alfred Eaton in *Ten North Frederick* and *From the Terrace* to George Lockwood, O'Hara presents the psychology of the individual American who is engaged in society and commerce and who is an insider rather than an outsider. Because he did not belong in Pennsylvania, Tate was somewhat ineffectual in his role, while Chapin was his opposite, the product of a small community who had an inappropriately grand ambition. Alfred Eaton is Chapin on a large scale, but he is so external a man that when he is prematurely retired there is nothing for him to do. George Lockwood is more interesting than all of these: he is at once more aggressive and more thoughtful, and he is more introspective than any of the others. As his "concern" begins to collapse owning to the disaffection of his children, he begins to realize what has happened to his life and what the family obsession has cost in human terms. But it is too late. Like the others, Lockwood comes to his end with a sense of futility and emptiness.

It is easy to say that America as a land of promise has failed these men only because they failed themselves, that they have been so single-minded in their pursuit of money that they have lost the power to care for others and are therefore isolated from humanity. That is of course true, but a person's creative impulses cannot be satisfied by domestic harmony nor by involvement in altruistic enterprises. O'Hara sees that aside from money, modern America has no system of rewards that can engage a mature person's interest. An attractive reward must create a new involvement and a new kind of responsibility. The award or prize is useless unless it has a future life. In England and the Continent, the award of a title frequently brought with it the responsibility of an estate, which in turn allowed the recipient of the honor to devote his energies to the continuing benefit of the society or land which he held as its trustee for future generations. Founded on egalitarian principles, the United States has no equivalent system and perhaps by definition can never have one. It is an American reality therefore that at the end of the line there is just a vacuum. Psychologically, it is evident that the drive for individual excellence does not blend with the impulse for love. The two are like oil and water; they will not mix.

If the American dream fails for those who achieve it materially, what of those who don't even get those rewards? Rich and poor alike seem to have to make do with a few moments of joy or loyalty or affection that come almost in violation of the system.

As the "private hells" of the upper classes relate to passion, O'Hara drew a great deal from his own experiences and from the difference between himself and the rich to write his books. "I've never stopped to consider happiness before," says George Lockwood at the end of the novel. But O'Hara had not only considered it, he had known it, and in losing it when he lost Margaretta Archbald, his first serious girl friend, he came close to nihilism. Unlike the rich who always have something to fall back on, he fell into the worst period of his life and was plagued by alcohol and de-

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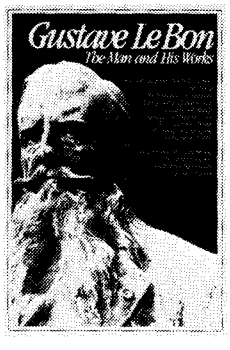

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structive impulses. Eventually the wound was healed, thanks to his two good marriages, but he had suffered too much to put faith in ideals. Yet he was saved from cynicism because he had learned about love and also learned the solace of work. He knew they were opposed tendencies and he ordered his life as best he could to take advantage of each. It was a pragmatic solution, but the turmoil of his life even afterward shows how much he was pulled in opposite directions. The best he could do was avoid generalities and stick to observable facts. "One of my troubles, I suppose," O'Hara wrote, "is that I have never gone around talking about—which is to say, writing about—Man, with a capital M, or Mankind. More simply, I think about and write about the individual man."

O'Hara still had enough energy left over from his writing to keep involved in the world. In 1964 he was asked to be a guest of honor for a weekend at the Bohemian Grove in California. He was interested in joining the Bohemian Club in San Francisco and understood that a visit to the Grove was a preliminary to being asked to join. The other guest was the attorney general, Robert Kennedy. "Now *there's* a little prick for you," O'Hara observed characteristically. Shortly afterward, O'Hara was invited to a White House dinner in honor of the presidential scholars, to which a number of writers and public figures were asked, including John Glenn, the astronaut; Stan Musial, the baseball player; Jonas Salk, the polio vaccine inventor; and, among the writers, Marianne Moore, S. J. Perelman, Louis Auchincloss, and John Updike. O'Hara had been outraged by what he called Robert Lowell's "impudent refusal" to attend an earlier Festival of the Arts at the White House on the grounds that his presence might be interpreted as a sign of political support for Lyndon Johnson and the Vietnam War. "I was better brought up than the poet Robert Lowell, who apparently was not taught that when the President of the United States invites you to the White House, you damn well go."

BY THE time of O'Hara's death in 1970 his reputation as a writer was falling and he no longer commanded the audiences, either popular or literary, of his early days. The question that arises is whether his social ambitions and upper-class habits fundamentally damaged his work. The French painter Fernand Léger is said to have remarked, "Either a comfortable life and lousy work or a lousy life and beautiful work." This is one of those half-truths that among our own novelists is contradicted by such different writers as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry James. Yet there is certainly an element of truth in it. O'Hara's social attitudes became increasingly like those of the rich he wrote about. He was a snob and became an outspoken political conservative. Yet is is a common critical error to equate an author with his subject and to assume that, as with O'Hara, because he wrote about the rich, or even liked them personally, he also spoke for them. O'Hara was a profoundly divided man, and in his study late at night, free of the concerns of his daily life, he allowed his basic human instincts to dominate his work. Although he liked upper-class life, he was too honest to accept its values in his writing. It was not easy for him to strike a balance between these opposed forces, but in his best work there is a tension between the two aspects of his nature—between his social views and his artistic honesty. This tension reflects his simultaneous admiration and distaste for the rich, as well as the conflict between his ambition and his love for other human beings. Gerald Murphy, a rich painter who knew both Fitzgerald and O'Hara, once said, "It is not what we do but what we do with our minds that counts, and for me only the invented parts of our life had any meaning." O'Hara probably would have agreed.

Often compared to Anthony Trollope and George Moore, O'Hara was like them because he dealt with the ordinary realities of his society. He did not write about peripheral people as Hemingway often did, nor did he dwell in a world of grotesques with Faulkner. In the tradition of Lewis and Dreiser and Anderson, he confronted the materialistic world of middle-class America, and as the spiritual heir of Edith Wharton, he explored the world of society with an intensity few others have even attempted. Yet he was more than the social chronicler who comes to mind in a comparison with Trollope or Moore. He was a man of tremendous feeling who tried to understand how such forces as ambition, sexual passion, and jealousy, as well as kindness and love, affect all human beings. There was a turbulence and violence in all his best work, just as there was in him. His vision of humanity was not hopeful, but he put value in loyalty, in communication among individuals, and in imaginative kindness. He is a writer about people far more than a chronicler of society. O'Hara's world is not only a mirror of reality but a product of his own feelings and intelligence.

O'Hara's industry—his obsession with writing—was a curse as well as a

IN THE WOODS

Just off of Round Swamp Road
there is the ragged margin of woods
which end, acres back, in tar pits
and the town dump. We used to go there,
eight, nine years of age, and scout for
bottles to return—two cents each—
or magazines with nudie pictures
dogeared and yellowed by weather. I remember
how one day we stripped in the sunlit rain
and danced, our white slivers
dangling between skinny thighs
as we ran through shin-high ferns
and whooped shrill cries—no one heard
or saw us, we were so deep
in the woods; hands on knees, we bowed
gasping, gasping until our breaths caught.

In the close quiet, hearing at first
that sound—like water rushing—far away,
we then listened harder: around us
the encircling whir of homecoming cars
from unseen roads, their tires'
guttural rasp on the asphalt seeming
each moment louder, nearer.

David Pollens

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blessing, for he wrote too much and the quantity of his work confused his public and caused him to be undervalued. His public statements and vanity turned people against him and he was resented and underrated, usually by his inferiors and often by his own associates. By now, however, it is clear what his best work consists of—30 or 40 short stories and novellas, for their artistic delicacy and a psychological acuteness unsurpassed in American literature; *Appointment in Samarra*, for its youthful vitality and honesty; *From the Terrace*, for its ambition, thoroughness, and immense readability; and *The Lockwood Concern*, for confronting most completely the values that tormented him through his life. These works make O'Hara one of the half-dozen most important writers of his time.

(This essay is adapted from *The Life of John O'Hara*, to be published later this month by E. P. Dutton. Copyright © 1980 by Frank MacShane.)

The Torturer's Truth

At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities
by Jean Améry
translated by Sidney Rosenfeld and Stella P. Rosenfeld

(Indiana University Press; $12.50)

Most books about the Holocaust are useful insofar as they provide facts, remembered or gathered. Beyond that, they usually reveal—what else can most of us reveal?—the helplessness of the mind before an evil beyond imagining or the helplessness of the imagination before an evil beyond understanding.

A few writers—Hannah Arendt, Eugen Kogon, David Rousset, Bruno Bettelheim—have struggled with a conflict between their need for some disciplined if limited generalizations and their recognition that finally it is neither possible nor desirable to encompass the Holocaust in a single, unified theory. Their work is valuable, but in the nature of things must be fragmentary. To this small group we may now add Jean Améry's collection of essays, austere in language, personal in voice though not subjective in character, and bearing, in every word and thought, the stamp of the authentic.

By authentic I mean here certain minimal, "negative" aspects: an absolute unwillingness to submit the experience of Auschwitz to any ideological categories, whether of politics or theology; a sustained effort to avoid both self-exculpation and self-attack; an intuitive apprehension that in our century there have been situations so extreme that it becomes immoral to make moral judgments about those who have had to bear them; and perhaps a refusal, certainly a hesitation, to draw "lessons." This may not be enough for declaring the presence of the authentic, but it takes us part of the way.

Jean Améry was born Hans Mayer in Vienna in 1912, the only child of a Catholic mother and Jewish father. The family experience, write Améry's devoted translators, was entirely assimilationist, yet gradually Améry "recognized the significance of his Jewish identity, which, after the proclamation of the Nuremburg Laws in 1935, he regarded as personally binding." In 1938 Améry fled with his Jewish wife from Austria to Belgium; two years later he was arrested by the Belgians as a German alien and ended in concentration camps in southern France, from which he escaped and returned to Belgium in 1941. For the next two years he worked in the fragile Belgian resistance; and then, in 1943, he was captured by the Gestapo, tortured, sent to Auschwitz, tortured again. He survived. Back in Belgium be became a writer, publishing the remarkable essays of *At the Mind's Limits* in 1966. He took his own life in 1978.

Améry was not religious, nor did he know much about the cultural heritage, either traditional or secular, of the European Jews. Still, he declared himself irrevocably a Jew. His political sym-

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pathies lay with the left, but in a preface to a 1977 reprint of his book he wrote, with evident dismay, that he had to "stand up against my natural friends," those doltish militants of the new left who were raging against Israel.

Améry begins, in his title essay, with a lucid description of the encounter between Auschwitz and intellect.

> Camp life demanded above all bodily agility and physical courage that necessarily bordered on brutality. The intelligentsia were only seldom blessed with both, and the moral courage that they often tried to employ in place of the physical was not worth a trifle.

In the camps the intellectual found himself alone with his intellect, "something unreal," even "a kind of forbidden luxury." If, in behalf of a remembered past, he tried to preserve some fragments of his earlier vocation, he increased the risk of physical destruction. To survive, writes Améry, it was necessary to "capitulate unconditionally in the face of reality." And "reality" was the unchecked power of the SS to torture and kill.

Once, in the lanes of Auschwitz, Améry encountered a philosopher from the Sorbonne and tried to engage this subtle mind in an intellectual conversation. The philosopher gave only monosyllabic, mechanical answers and then fell silent. It was not, says Améry, that this man's senses had been blunted; what had happened was something more extreme—"he simply no longer believed in the reality of the world of the mind." If that is so, one feels inclined to add, the grunts of the philosopher were quite appropriate: there was nothing more to say.

FAITH HELPED sometimes, faith in God, faith in the party, faith in humanity, faith in almost any delusion. Faith blinded men. Believers in God and believers in Marx, confronted with the unbelievable, fell back upon belief. The most extreme ordeal known to mankind left them, if they chanced to survive it, intellectually unchanged. These men of faith were convinced that "nothing unheard-of occurred, but only what they, the ideologically schooled or God-believing men, had always expected. . . ." Blindness enabled survival.

How could anyone in his right mind, asks Améry, fail to see that Auschwitz formed a complete mockery of any vision of God's mercy and that it had "nothing to do with capitalism . . . but was the monstrous product of sick minds and perverted souls?" In a lacerating sentence he adds: "The word always dies when the claim of some reality is total." For then there can be no space between thought and the outer world. And as a result, "intellect in its totality," the proudest claim and conquest of our civilization, "declared itself incompetent" in the camps.

Now all this yields a testimony more bleak, certainly less "exalted," than the testimony of other survivors. It obviously makes a mockery of all the torturous moral exegesis which would extract some "transcendence," some "triumph of the spirit," from the endless accumulation of corpses. But may it not, nevertheless, be true?

In Améry's reflections there is no solace, no consolation. There is only a description of "the state of someone who was overcome, that is all." What does the Holocaust mean? First and foremost, if anything at all, it means that millions were tormented and destroyed in what Arendt calls "an atmosphere of permanent dying, in which death as well as life [was] effectively obstructed." By this last phrase Arendt suggests that the camps,

> by making death itself anonymous, robbed death of the meaning which it had always been possible for it to have. In a sense [the Nazis] took away the individual's own death, proving that henceforth nothing belonged to him and he belonged to no one.

If Améry's view of the camps is close to that of any previous writer, it is to Arendt's.

There is counter-testimony, less on the "meaning" of the Holocaust than on the experience of it. Bruno Bettelheim, in his writings about the year he spent in Dachau and Buchenwald (1939), seems to be saying something notably at variance with Améry's reflections. For Bettelheim the only way to cope with the camps was to struggle to "understand" them, to keep intact his powers of intellectual (especially psychological) analysis, "to safeguard his ego in such a way that, if by any good luck he should regain liberty, he would be approximately the same person he was when deprived of liberty." And that is precisely what Améry says could *not* be done: no survivor, no one tortured by the SS, could be "approximately the same person" as before.

There is a partial explanation for this difference in memory and understanding. Bettelheim was a prisoner in 1939; Améry in 1943-45. Bettelheim was held in concentration camps where there was an abundance of death but not yet an effort to realize the Final Solution; Améry was held in the Auschwitz that Arendt called a "corpse factory."

Auschwitz was the culmination of Dachau and Buchenwald, but also significantly different. In Dachau, writes Améry, the intellect still had a residual "social function," while in Auschwitz "the problem of the confrontation of intellect and horror appeared in a more radical form and, if the expression is permitted here, in a *purer* form." In Auschwitz "the intellect was nothing more than itself . . . nothing other than the pure content of consciousness," bereft, abandoned, and a threat to survival.

BUT IF the comparison goes part of the way toward explaining the difference in testimony between two such exceptional observers as Bettelheim and Améry, it does not go all the way. A difference remains, and it is a significant difference. I see no reason for anyone, let alone an American who has never suffered comparable experiences, to judge between them; it is possible that further reflection will show that both of these testimonies contain their own portions of truth, despite the conflicts between them. For there may have been differences, not only in the camp situations, but in the formative sensibilities and philosophical outlooks of these two men which now manifest themselves as variations of testimony. Before so terrible a set of circumstances we probably never expect or desire a single, consistent truth—only approximations, only personal salvage, only the grappling of victims.

Améry is visibly impatient with the chatter that has grown up regarding the Holocaust, especially the chatter about "human dignity." In the essay "Torture" he writes that the first blow of the torturer's fist or the first cut of the torturer's whip brings home to a prisoner the knowledge that he is completely helpless; it teaches him that whatever trust he may once have placed in the world or in any other person has collapsed. With that blow "a part of our life ends and it can never again be revived."

What Améry keeps insisting upon is that in extreme situations the physical takes primacy.

> A slight pressure by the tool-wielding hand is enough to turn the other—along with his head, in which are perhaps

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stored Kant and Hegel, and all nine symphonies, and *The World as Will and Representation*—into a shrilly squealing piglet at slaughter.

The victim learns there can be in the world "an absolute sovereign" going about his business of torture "in an orgy of unchecked self-expansion." And thereby, if only the task is undertaken with sufficient patience, "the transformation of the person into flesh becomes complete."

This is terrifying. But in reading Améry's pages I found myself wondering: Is there any point in denying it? If our enemies, the masters of Auschwitz and Gulag, know this, must we not know it too? Améry writes:

> Whoever has succumbed to torture can no longer feel at home in the world. . . . It is *fear* that henceforth reigns over him. Fear—and also what is called resentments. They remain, and have scarcely a chance to concentrate into a seething, purifying thirst for revenge.

To these resentments Améry holds fast, with neither pride nor shame. He wants "the crime [to] become a moral reality for the criminal, in order that he be swept into the truth of his atrocity." This strikes one as perhaps the only point in the book where Améry slips into a sort of oracular murkiness, though it comes as a relief insofar as it forms a break from his unremitting austerity. It suggests, further, that even those who have gone through hell and stripped their minds of the last illusion of hope still must find themselves, wittingly or not, yielding a little to hope. Or, if not hope, then to ordinary sentiments of humanity, as in the following passage from Améry:

> The experience of persecution was, at the very bottom, that of an extreme *loneliness*. At stake for me is the release from the abandonment that has persisted from that time until today. When SS-man Wajs [an especially brutal torturer] stood before the firing squad, he experienced the moral truth of his crimes. At that moment he was with *me*—and I was no longer alone with the shovel handle. I would like to believe that at the instant of his execution he wanted exactly as much as I to turn back time, to undo what he had done.

What can this mean? If the SS man "experienced the moral truth of his crimes," then he felt some guilt or remorse. But we know from the accounts of the last moments of the Nuremberg defendants and other Nazis convicted of war crimes that they felt, or expressed, nothing of the sort. They died unrepentent Hitlerites. But if all the SS man felt were the *consequences* of his crime—if, say, he felt that it would have been wiser not to get mixed up with the SS and thereby avoid the firing squad—then one can conclude only that he did not experience "the moral truth of his crimes." For then he was not, at his last moment, "with" Améry. And if he did want to "turn back time" as much as Améry, it is doubtful that he wanted it for the same, or even related, reasons.

So I can only conclude that in this difficult passage Améry has lapsed into a kind of moralism or sentimentalism which does find a tiny shred of redemption in the Holocaust—something his entire book denies. And as I say, one almost welcomes the lapse.

The concluding essay in Améry's book is called "On the Necessity and Impossibility of Being a Jew." It is at once touching and vulnerable, and without a trace of that self-satisfaction which disfigures so much of Jewish discourse in America. When Améry hears someone say "We Jews . . . ," he feels discomfort, "not because I don't want to be a Jew, but only because I cannot be one. And yet must be one." On one hand, as he writes, everyone must be what he was formed to be in the first years of his life, and he, Améry, was not formed to be a Jew. On the other hand, he affirms that he "became a person not by subjectively appealing to my abstract humanity but by discovering myself within the given social reality as a rebelling Jew. . . ."

On his left forearm, writes Améry, "I bear the Auschwitz number; it reads more briefly than the Pentateuch or the Talmud and yet provides more thorough information." The number prompts and enables him to declare himself "without God, without history, without messianic-national hope," yet indestructibly and forever a Jew. It is "my burden and my support."

It would be foolish and presumptuous to argue with Améry, since his book matters as the testimony of a profoundly serious man. It is a book that leads to no declamations or theories, no "conclusions"—only to its own lucidities, its own opacities. It may not speak ultimate truth, but in its every turn and crease, it bears marks of the true.

Irving Howe

Irving Howe is author, with Kenneth Libo, of *How We Lived: A Documentary History of Immigrant Jews in America, 1880-1930* (Marek).

Anatomy of the Right

The New Right: We're Ready to Lead
by Richard A. Viguerie

(The Viguerie Company; $8.95)

Thunder on the Right
by Alan Crawford

(Pantheon; $13.95)

The Odyssey of the American Right
by Michael W. Miles

(Oxford University Press; $19.95)

What has happened, then? Is it an episode that we have witnessed, or an epoch? Was it just that the voters, in a fit of frustration, malaise, or sheer irritation at Jimmy Carter's sanctimonious ineffectuality, cast a largely personal vote against him, and only incidentally for Ronald Reagan? The pattern of voting generally, and the Republican victories in the Senate especially, make that an unlikely interpretation. Then has the tide really turned, as it did in 1932 and as it has not turned clearly and decisively since then?

From 1968 until this year the signals coming from the political arena, and above all from successive presidential contests, have been contradictory and confused. You could say a lot of things about 1968 but not that it marked a

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decisive turning point. Nor was Nixon's victory in 1972, landslide though it was, evidence of any decisive rejection either of the Democratic party or of the hegemony of liberalism. For one thing, George McGovern was too eccentric a candidate; any Democrat who inspires so deep a dislike in so large a fraction of the labor movement has to be called that. And again, can anyone swear, even now, that if the Democrats had nominated Edward Kennedy in 1972 he would have carried only Massachusetts and the District of Columbia?

So the Republican victory in 1972 could not be taken as evidence of a conservative undertow. But still less could the Democratic gains in the Watergate midterm elections of 1974, or Jimmy Carter's election in 1976, be taken as proving the opposite. For the whole second half of the 1970s, the conventional wisdom refused to accept the hypothesis of a swing to conservatism. Commentators—and even a president—spoke instead of "malaise." There was much talk of fragmentation and of the decline of party, of eddies and epicycles.

There was no doubt that the people, or plenty of them, were turning away from liberalism, or from many of its most cherished shibboleths. But did that mean that they were embracing conservatism as an alternative ideology? It was more usual to speak of confusion and complexity, of the proliferation of single-issue interest groups, of manipulation by the politicos, and of vast, yawning indifference on the part of a growing proportion of their reluctant flock.

One party, certainly, was declining. There was little doubt about that. After 1965 the Democrats seemed to have lost their own confidence and the country's attention. And the Democratic ideology, that peculiar compound of radical social meliorism, anti-communist internationalism, and power politics known, for no historically convincing reason, as "liberalism," seemed to be moribund too.

It was natural enough for a generation of interpreters and commentators who had come of age under the hegemony of Democratic liberalism to jump to the conclusion that, if the Roosevelt coalition in the Democratic party was falling apart, and if at the same time the Republican party was bitterly split (which it was), then surely party itself as an institution was on the way out. It was natural for them to reach that conclusion. I do not even say that they were wrong. The evidence that the influence of party is declining in American political life is very strong. But another interpretation of the phenomenon is possible.

What if, beneath what looked like so much nebular incoherence and whirl, a new consensus was being forged out of the swirling vapors of resentment and rebellion? What if all those single-issue interest groups were to come together? What if the right-to-workers and the right-to-lifers, the anti-Communists, the anti-taxites, the anti-gays, the pro-guns, the anti-busers, the anti-ERA lobby, the Moral Majority, and the whole brawling host of ambitious anti-liberals could be shaped into a new conservative coalition, as FDR once drilled his awkward squad of southern bourbons and northern blacks, New York intellectuals, midwestern ethnics, and labor people of every stripe from communist left to Catholic right into a single functioning political alliance?

Richard Viguerie, not surprisingly, thinks that this is just what has happened. "It's very simple," he begins his book, "the left is old and tired. . . . The New Right is young and vigorous. . . . Liberalism is almost stone cold dead in American politics. And conservatism is ready, willing and able to take its place." "Our success," he says, without false modesty for himself, "is built on four elements: single issue groups, multi-issue conservative groups, coalition politics, and direct mail."

With artless egotism and considerable shrewdness, Viguerie has plaited together what might have been the threads of three different books. One would have been his own autobiography in the Samuel Smiles or Horatio Alger tradition: "I had come a very long way from the Houston oil refinery, a walk-up flat in Greenwich village and a three-room office over Morton's pharmacy on Capitol Hill." The second book would have been a triumphant, if crude, manifesto for the new right:

> It's past time that you and I and every other American asked some cold hard questions.
>
> Who lost Iran?
>
> Who lost Afghanistan?
>
> Who lost Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia?
>
> Who crippled the FBI and the CIA?
>
> Who sold the Russians computers and other sophisticated equipment which have been used to stamp out freedom?
>
> . . . The answer in every case is LIBERALS.

And the third is a kind of history of the rise of conservative politics in the United States since the 1940s.

As befits the man who has tapped the gold in the wallets of four and a half million contributors to conservative causes and raised seven million dollars for Senator Jesse Helms in one political Klondike, Viguerie's thinking is positive. The story, as he tells it, is of tributaries rushing in from every corner of American life, and all harmoniously converging in one mighty Mississippi of conservative thought and action. He traces the origins back to Frank Hanighen and the founding of *Human Events*. He does not neglect the achievements of early heroes like Whittaker Chambers. Generously he insists that "two men are more responsible than any other [*sic*] for the strength and vitality of conservatism in America today—Bill Buckley and Barry Goldwater."

The tale picks up momentum on that August 1974 morning when the author turns on his television to watch Gerald Ford announce that he was picking Nelson Rockefeller as vice president. "Nelson Rockefeller! . . . The liberal who got Richard Nixon to agree to the infamous midnight Pact of Fifth Avenue in 1960. . . . I could hardly have been more upset if Ford had selected Teddy Kennedy!" Much of the rest of the book is given over to an account of how our hero and his chums got together to put a stop to such infamous dealings with the enemy. He introduces his friends: Paul Weyrich of the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, Terry Dolan of the National Conservative Political Action Committee, Howard Phillips of the Conservative Caucus, Morton Blackwell, Reed Larson, Joseph Coors, and the rest.

These same conspirator-entrepreneurs of the new right who are the heroes of Viguerie's account, paladins all without fear and without reproach, are the villains of Alan Crawford's book. Crawford writes, he says, as a conservative who has become "convinced that the activities of the New Right have the potential of being far more damaging to the conservative cause than anything the liberal opposition might do." Crawford's credentials as a conservative are irreproachable. From 1973 to 1979 he worked succes-

Coming:
Where Have All the Soviet Writers Gone?

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sively for *Human Events, Conservative Digest*, Young Americans for Freedom, and Senator James Buckley. Yet he attacks the new right every bit as fiercely as Viguerie denounces Nelson Rockefeller and the Republican liberals.

Viguerie, the organizer, fundraiser, and man of action, affects to treat conservatives and the new right as though they were fellow soldiers in one army, the "conservative movement." Perhaps the new right are the keener soldiers, more sharply aware of the right tactics to follow and of the dangers of slackness; still, they are all in the same army. For Crawford, on the contrary, the new right are the antithesis of true conservatives. "Right wing activity in America," he writes, "has increasingly manifested itself as a protest movement, waging war with the status quo, unwilling to accept the political and economic order." And he wheels in an impressive array of exhibits to prove his point. "I'm a conservative," says Roger Jepsen, who beat Dick Clark to become senator from Iowa, "*because I'm for change.*" "We are radicals," says Paul Weyrich, protégé of the brewer Coors, "we cannot accept the status quo." "To build cultural siege cannon out of the populist steel of Idaho, Mississippi and working-class Milwaukee" is the task of statesmanship proposed by Harvard-educated Kevin Phillips, "and then blast the Eastern liberal establishment to ideo-institutional smithereens."

There is obviously an element of demagoguery about this neopopulist posture. Kevin Phillips is not the only siege-gunner who learned his populism in Ivy-covered halls. The other Phillips, Howard of the American Conservative Union and Young Americans for Freedom, was at Yale, and so was William Rusher, who strikes hairy-chested populist attitudes in Bill Buckley's chair at the *National Review*. Yet Crawford is convincing when he maintains that "the New Right . . . supports whoever shares its desire for radical political *change* [my italics] and its resentments of the status quo."

Crawford is clearly right in asking whether a group that is bound together by its angry hostility to the status quo, and whose leaders repeatedly proclaim their desire for change, can properly be called conservative. But he does not think the point is worth making merely because he wants to see the proprieties preserved. "What is at stake," he argues, "is nothing short of what kind of democracy is to prevail in America."

True conservatives, Crawford argues, defend a limited, constitutional democracy inherited from the founders. The new right has flirted dangerously, in his view, with "direct democracy" through its use of such techniques as direct mail solicitation and television. The new right prefers "the fanatics and demagogues—the Anita Bryants, Howard Jarvises and John Briggses—to the reasoned, responsible leadership associated with classic conservatism." The American right is moving "from a traditional conservative defense of representative government against the onslaughts of direct democracy into a celebration of government by rabble-rousing, by adding machine, by majorities of the moment."

A lot of criticisms can be made of Crawford's thesis, and many of them probably will be made. Pragmatic conservatives and loyal Republicans will ask why he has to put so much emphasis on the divisions between old conservatives and new populists just when a new conservative/populist administration needs unity. Liberals will share his fear of rabble-rousing on the right, but not his enthusiasm for Hamiltonian constitutionalism or his distaste for direct democracy. They should all agree that he has achieved a notable work of intellectual and political history. He has told the story with clarity and, considering that this is a polemical work, with fairness. I believe that he has diagnosed correctly the fundamental differences between the new right and its conservative allies.

If Crawford points out that Viguerie's host is split two ways, Michael Miles shows us that it always has been far more divided than that. His thesis is that the American conservative movement of the past 25 years is, as Frank Mayer called it in the mid-1960s, "a delayed reaction to the revolutionary transformation of America that began with the election of Roosevelt in 1932." The shock for the Republican party was traumatic. It had ruled the country for the greater part of 70 years since the Civil War, and during that time its ideology of capitalist liberalism had enjoyed an essentially unchallenged hegemony. Suddenly not only were the Republicans kicked out of power, but their ideas, their deepest convictions, and even their unshakable morality were in doubt.

As a result of that shock the Republican party split three ways. Western Progressives supported FDR on domestic issues, but opposed intervention in World War II. Eastern Republicans opposed the New Deal, but actively supported intervention. "Regular Republicans" in the midwest and west consolidated control of the party apparatus and became the nucleus of the Republican right for 20 years. Miles skillfully traces the stately, if ill-tempered, minuet performed by these various factions. He points out, for example, that it was not until the right could escape from the dilemma between isolation and interventionism that it could effectively attack the New Deal; it took the fall of China in 1949 to offer that opportunity, and that was why McCarthyism happened when it did, and not earlier.

Through most of his book Miles combines a sure touch in his political narrative with a nice sense of the style and mood of the different traditions he analyzes: the *petit bourgeois* envy of McCarthyism, the emergence of Buckley from the Catholic tradition ("He matched arrogance with arrogance, pomposity with pomposity, convolution with convolution. His was the style to emulate. . . ."), the historic irony that the very laissez-faire ideology which had triumphed over the south in the Gilded Age emerged as the flag of reviving southern pride in the 1960s. The book's great flaw is that it tails off. For

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one thing, it ends with Watergate. Even if Ronald Reagan had not won the 1980 election, it surely was plain that the saga of American conservatism did not end with Watergate. Even if the tale that is being told is the *nostos*, the return after the Fall of 1932, 1974 does not seem an appropriate ending. The suitors were still in the hall, Penelope's web had still to be unpicked and rewoven many a weary night, and the man of many wiles had not yet come home.

Richard Viguerie and his friends have the political wiles, and they are not afraid either to fight or to work at the threads of political organizing. Has their time come now? After 50 years in the wilderness, has the American right come home? Will conservative doctrine establish itself for the next generation as the ruling public philosophy of the United States?

Liberals ought to confront the possibility that the pendulum has swung, and that these things are in the making. But I for one would be more ready to believe it if I could discern any coherent body of serious beliefs, other than hatred of liberalism and resentment of the imagined hauteur and hypocrisy of its devotees, to connect all the angry prejudices of the new right.

Godfrey Hodgson

Godfrey Hodgson is the author of the recently published *All Things to All Men: The False Promise of the Modern American Presidency* (Simon & Schuster).

The Prince of Darkness is Pope

Earthly Powers by Anthony Burgess

(Simon & Schuster; $15.95)

The phenomena of demonic possession and exorcism seem to be taken seriously in Anthony Burgess's new novel. Has Burgess himself been possessed by a scribbling demon? More than 20 novels in as many years, together with more than 20 titles in a variety of other genres—the record suggests that some agency not quite human might have been at work. Demons traditionally speak in many tongues, as does the polyglot Burgess, who is also capable of making up languages of his own (*The Clockwork Orange* and other novels, *passim*). The range of his productions, from children's books to studies of Joyce, hints at multiple possession, at the possibility that the name of Burgess's demon may be Legion. And now, as if all the other manifestations of occult influence had been largely diversionary, we are presented with what has been hailed as a Tolstoyan masterwork, a 600-page novel, 10 years in the making, that offers nothing less than the social, literary, and religious history of our times from World War I to the Jonestown massacre, with extensive stopovers for the Holocaust and the *aggiornamento* of John XXIII (herein known as Gregory XVII). Tolstoyan or Luciferian? That is the question with which the reviewer of *Earthly Powers* must wrestle.

"It was the afternoon of my eighty-first birthday, and I was in bed with my catamite when Ali announced that the archbishop had come to see me." With this sentence—labeled as an "arresting opening" by the narrator—we are introduced to some of the major preoccupations of the novel. Its narrator is Kenneth Toomey, a literary jack-of-all-trades, a writer at once rich, worldly, homosexual, and disillusioned, who will remind readers of Somerset Maugham as he was depicted for us in Ted Morgan's recent biography of that famous old party. Having been expelled from Tangier because of the murderous misbehavior of his catamite, Toomey now lives in luxurious exile in Malta. The catamite (a word derived from the Latin rendering of "Ganymede") is Geoffrey Enright, a viciously insulting and sadistic drunkard reminiscent of one of Maugham's secretary-companions. The archbishop of Malta has come on an ecclesiastical mission at once delicate and exalted: to raise the matter of a possible miracle that Toomey witnessed many years before in a Chicago hospital—a miracle which, if it can be substantiated, will serve as important evidence in the proceedings now under way to canonize the late pope Gregory XVII. The making of this pope, known before his elevation as Don Carlo Campanati, is one of the thickest of the many strands that Toomey-Burgess tangles and then unravels with practiced ingenuity.

The other major strand is of course the life and literary career of Toomey himself. After the opening in 1971 the novel jumps backward to 1916, when the young Toomey, who had been seduced at the age of 14 by the Irish writer George Russell ("AE"), breaks with the Catholic church because he cannot repudiate homosexual love or resolve to lead a celibate existence. But the break is far from complete; he retains a *nostalgie* for the faith and even imagines a return to it when the physical fires have burned low. We meet Toomey's early lovers and we meet his family: the dentist father, the devout French mother, the gentle, consumptive brother, and the beautiful and spirited younger sister, Hortense, who loves Kenneth but can address him only in terms of sarcasm and derision. It is through Hortense that a permanent link with the future pope is established, for she marries his (supposed) brother, Domenico Campanati, a composer for whom Toomey is writing a libretto. For the next 40 years we hop around the world with Toomey, following him to Paris, where he meets Jim Joyce and Ford Madox Ford (who has very bad breath); to Italy for the wedding of Hortense and Domenico and our introduction to the rest of the Campanati; to London and an encounter with Ruddy Kipling; again to Paris, where, under the auspices of Harry and Caresse Crosby, Hortense becomes impregnated at the Bal des Beaux Arts (Domenico is sterile); then on to the Malay Peninsula, where Toomey, in search of Maugham-esque literary material, falls chastely in love with an English doctor, Philip Shawcross, who dies hideously as the result of diabolic influence which Carlo, now a traveling monsignor, arrives too late to counteract (though he deals most effectively with the responsible warlock and his familiar); to Chicago, for the gangster-killing of the oldest Campanati brother and the aforementioned miracle performed by the ubiquitous Carlo; to Hollywood, where illiterate Jewish moguls make hash of the script Toomey has written about King Arthur and the defense of Christendom; to New York, where. . . .

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The decades flash by almost as fast as the countries, marked by snatches of popular song and detailed accounts of whatever the chic Hortense is wearing when she makes one of her appearances. Now we are in Nazi Germany for a film festival at which Toomey has the misfortune of saving Himmler's life from an assassin's bullet. London, meanwhile, is receiving distinguished refugees ("My dear," says one of Toomey's old lovers, "I saw Sigmund Freud with his daughter in a pub, would you believe it? That mouth looks terrible."). Toomey travels to Austria in a vain attempt to extricate a Nobel Prize-winning writer, only to be trapped himself by the outbreak of war. At the war's end, Toomey, again in New York, finds that Hortense, who has been divorced by Domenico, is involved in a lesbian affair with a black singer; Hortense is drinking too much. . . . I could go on and on. So crammed is *Earthly Powers* with events and plot-turnings that a mere catalogue of them would run to many pages. Toomey is always Johnny-on-the-spot, always popping up where the action is. In this respect he is like Lanny Budd in that series of public-event novels (now forgotten?) that Upton Sinclair used to grind out. Some of this is entertaining, but there are disadvantages to the method. The namedropping is incessant and finally, as in real life, a bore. Too often the dialogue becomes portentous, weighed down by the necessity of speaking for history:

> 'You had a good flight?'
>
> 'Excellent. I can thoroughly recommend the *Hindenburg*. It is the only way to fly. Have you flown in the *Hindenburg*? It is a masterwork of German aeronautical engineering.'

The characterization of Toomey suffers, I think, from his role as witness to the horrors of the age. Much of the time he seems less an agent in his own right than a reactor to the events swirling around him. Another problem is presented by the ready-made associations with Maugham. The loneliness in the midst of wealth, the betrayals endured, the self-deprecation of his art—these are now too familiar a part of the persona to interest or move us very much. The armoring of world-weariness, of irony, of knowingness, is burdensome to sustain over hundreds of pages. While we are clearly intended to sympathize with Toomey's homosexual plight and the anguish it causes him, we end up impatient with his poor taste in lovers, who, with the exception of the chaste Dr. Shawcross, are tedious delinquents. Even nastier than Geoffrey is an earlier secretary, Ralph, the younger brother of Hortense's lesbian lover; a bad poet, he furiously rejects any criticism of his verse by Toomey.

> 'You bastard. You *white* bastard.'
>
> 'Ah, white now, am I? Watch that, Ralph. You'll end up saying that only blacks have any real moral and political and spiritual and aesthetic values. That's only the Nazi philosophy in blackface.'
>
> 'Look at yourself,' he sneered, as I took my pajamas off. . . . 'Little pink prick and shrunk shanks and potbelly. And you talk about aesthetic values.'

And so on. The dialogue between Toomey and his lovers consists of little more than elaborate bitchiness, sprinkled with "my dears" and cruel or patronizing put-downs—just the sort of thing to give buggery a bad name. The forces of gay liberation have a perfect right to protest.

CARLO Campanati is a more complex creation than Toomey, less bound to his historical prototype. Large-nosed, strong-toothed, paunchy, he gourmandizes and drinks with gusto, gambles with uncanny luck at Monte Carlo, and travels about the world on various ecclesiastical missions, often pausing to engage in a bit of exorcism. For Carlo is a mighty foe of the Devil in all his guises, attacking him vigorously with the *Rituale Romanum* in one hand while using his cross as a battering ram with the other. Ambitious to "make" pope, he rises in the hierarchy, helps put the Vatican finances on a sound footing, and fearlessly defies both the local black-shirts and, later, the Nazi occupiers of Italy. During the war, as archbishop of Moneta, he is instrumental in saving many Jews. Proclaiming his love for mankind and his neo-Pelagian belief in mankind's essential goodness, he regards all evil as external rather than innate—as stemming from the Devil, who is permitted by God to exist so that man may exercise his free will in choosing between good and evil. As pope—the most popular of modern times—he works tirelessly to update and broaden the church, advocating ecumenism and the vernacular mass, going even to Moscow to preach the brotherhood of man before the Presidium.

Though the presentation of this robust and energetic figure seems warmly favorable, including as it does a number of blind spots and foibles, the wary reader begins to notice something dubious, even macabre, about some of the phenomena that accompany the appearances of this peripatetic cleric. He is always on hand for terrible events, such as the gangland butchering of his older brother or the weird death of Dr. Shawcross. His adaptation of the mass to African folkways has, in one instance, a dreadful consequence. Even the miracle in the Chicago hospital turns out in a strange way—decades later—to be perhaps more useful as ammunition for the *advocatus diaboli* than as evidence of Carlo's saintliness. While he seems entirely on the side of the angels, could it be that all along he has been the secret agent of the one who, before his fall, had been the brightest angel of them all? Certainly the odor emanating from the rapidly decaying corpse of Gregory XVII is hardly that of sanctity. (The gruesome details with which Burgess describes the body as it lies in state are apparently derived from the actual case of Pius XII.) One can imagine the leer—or rictus, to use one of his favorite words—on the author's face as he inserts a pin into the image of the beloved pontiff. Is *Earthly Powers* to be read as a covertly reactionary attack upon the whole Johannine revolution, as vengeance for the abandonment of the Latin mass, as a reassertion of St. Augustine's defeat of the heretic Pelagius?

That would be to take the whole performance with undue gravity. Sensationalism—not moral or religious profundity—is what Burgess has to offer. For thick, greasy, loathsome detail, the scenes of exorcism in *Earthly Powers* match anything to be found in *The Exorcist*. The horrors of our century are real enough, and Burgess does full justice to them in Toomey's account of his visit to Buchenwald; but to these the author adds scenes of individual cruelty, disease, disfigurement (the beautiful Hortense loses an eye), and suffering that come to seem gratuitous. When the only pleasant, attractive, and wholesome young couple in the entire novel—Hortense's son and daughter-in-law—go off on an anthropological visit to one of the new African states, the by-then experienced reader knows almost exactly what will befall them. The great theological issues—free will and predestination, God's curtailment of his own omniscience, original sin, the problem of evil—too often have the

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appearance of being little more than scaffolding upon which to hang glib oppositions. The Augustinian-Pelagian controversy has been used before by Burgess, in the form of a poem incorporated in *The Clockwork Testimony, or Enderby's End*. (The same novel also includes a militant black poet "oppressed" by his white critic and a reference to Ford Madox Ford's halitosis.) As a "Catholic" novel, *Earthly Powers* bears about as much relationship to the novels of Graham Greene and Mauriac as do Roger Peyrefitte's "exposés" of the inner workings of the Church Militant and Triumphant (*The Keys of St. Peter, The Knights of Malta*) which titillated and scandalized a wide international audience in the 1950s.

To give the devilish author his due, a good deal of entertainment is to be found in *Earthly Powers*. Burgess is, as he has demonstrated many times before, a clever, linguistically erudite spinner of words. He can be amusingly nasty on occasion. He purveys lots of rather specialized information. He has a nice instinct for the special, telling details of a period, though he does not always avoid anachronisms. And he can construct a dramatically vivid scene with the best of them—for instance, the Vatican conclave at which Carlo is elected pope after the sudden death of his just elected rival. But in a novel as long as *Earthly Powers*, Burgess is damaged by his own facility. The words come too trippingly; the sensationalism and sadism pall; the gossip grows tedious. Though much space is devoted to describing states of feeling and to (most irritable) expressions of feeling, nothing seems adequately felt. "Meaty, "fruity," "fatty,". . ."flatulent"—such were the gustatory and alimentary adjectives that came to mind as I made my way through the most "oral" of novels, one in which every meal is described in loving detail and in which every spiteful impulse is fully voiced.

Robert Towers

Robert Towers, who teaches at Queen's College, is author of *The Necklace of Kali* and *The Monkey Watcher* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich).

It Can't Happen Here

Collaborationism in France During the Second World War by Bertram M. Gordon

(Cornell University Press; $19.50)

"The history of day before yesterday is least well known; the history of yesterday is most forgotten." It was a Frenchman, I believe, who produced this aphorism, but its relevance is transatlantic and probably worldwide. We have now entered a time when some American undergraduates can ask an instructor, "What do you mean when you talk about 'the underground'?" and "Is it true that we dropped an atomic bomb on Japan? Why in the world would we bomb a friendly country?"

True, not all young Americans (or Europeans) are ignorant of the events of 1939-45. Hitler's war has its aficionados, young as well as old. No doubt they find in it an escape from the doldrums of daily life, a kind of earthbound equivalent to *Star Wars*. Some of them, however, seem to have lost the ability to discriminate between the good guys and the bad. Perhaps they too, even though they possess a technician's knowledge of campaigns and battles, have lost track of what the war was all about. Or perhaps, in some cases at least, they are living proof that the mentality of collaborationism is still around. Nazi military equipment and memorabilia have become prized collectors' items, and a few fanatical types have been observed acting out their fantasies in weekend military exercises, complete with swastikas and German rifles. One even hears of brownshirts marching in staid American cities, and of bombs planted outside synagogues.

In France, what is called *la mode rétro* has brought us lately a number of films about the years of German occupation, and an increasing flow of books about the period. That was not the case for a long time after the liberation. Frenchmen then were reluctant to grapple seriously with the record of those trying times; one author entitled his book *Four Years to be Expunged From Our History*. An orthodox version nevertheless emerged. It gave center stage to the anti-German resistance movements, and implied or declared outright that Frenchmen generally warmly supported the resisters. The Vichy regime also got some notice, either through the exculpatory memoirs of ex-Vichy leaders or through historians' efforts to explain why France, alone among the occupied countries, had a pseudo-independent regime, and to what extent the Vichyites succeeded in their professed attempt to shield France from the fate of Poland. But the real pro-Nazis, after the initial postwar purge, were pushed into limbo, dismissed as a tiny coterie of unscrupulous opportunists or fanatical kooks. A few of them—especially those who had volunteered to fight on the Russian front—sought through memoirs to justify themselves, but their books attracted little notice.

Lately, however, there has been a modest revival of interest in these extremist factions and in their leaders, the aspirant Hitlers of France. Marcel Ophuls's film *Le chagrin et la pitié* gave a featured role to Christian de la Mazière, who had served as a volunteer in the Waffen-SS and who presented a remarkably dispassionate explanation of his wartime conduct. Some young French historians, their curiosity whetted by the film and by what seemed to be a historical blackout, began to look into this dark side of the occupation years. The most recent and probably the best of these studies, Pascal Ory's *Les collaborateurs*, is the work of a scholar so young that he knew neither the occupation nor the liberation.

American scholars have been less reticent about delving into the record of the occupation era. Pioneering work was done by such specialists as Stanley Hoffmann and Robert Soucy, and in 1972 Robert O. Paxton published *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order*, which is generally rated the best book to date on Pétain's regime. It was also one of the most controversial, since it dealt unsparingly with the myths cultivated by the ex-Vichyites and even with some comforting beliefs adopted by the ex-resisters. Much of Paxton's evidence was drawn from the files of the German occupation authorities; those records cast a glaring new light on what Vichy officials were saying and doing, and on their motives for saying and doing it.

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Bertram M. Gordon, another American historian of the new generation, has now complemented Paxton's work by examining in painstaking detail the ideas and actions of the various collaborationist groups in occupied France. He too has drawn extensively on the German official files, and in addition he has interviewed a number of Frenchmen who were active in those groups. Each major faction gets a chapter: Marcel Déat's RNP, the first abortive attempt to transform France into a one-party state; Jacques Doriot's PPF, the only one (Gordon argues) with "serious pretensions to power"; Joseph Darnand's Milice, created originally by Pierre Laval as a paramilitary arm of the Vichy government, but evolving soon into an almost independent radical-right movement; and lesser fry such as Deloncle's MSR, Bucard's Francistes, and the Groupe Collaboration headed by Alphonse de Chateaubriant, committed mainly to cultural cooperation with the Germans.

Such a proliferation of rival factions, whose leaders engaged in a kind of cold civil war as they competed for converts and for the Germans' favor, would seem sufficient to explain why none of the collaborationist factions came near to achieving its ambitions. Even more important, however, was Hitler's scornful rebuff of all of these ideological fellow travelers. The Führer brushed off those German officials, such as Ambassador Otto Abetz, who pushed for official support of a French totalitarian regime; and in 1942 Hitler even ordered that French volunteers no longer be used on the Russian front. Gordon shows convincingly that for Hitler's purposes it was best to deal with a quasi-independent regime like that at Vichy, since it might be able to keep France quiet while the Germans were fighting and winning their war in the East. The collaborationists were useful only as bogeys—potential substitutes for Vichy, employed to frighten Vichy into compliance with German demands. The collaborationists collected German subsidies but received little moral support; one suspects that even if the Nazis had won the war, their French acolytes would have been accorded little influence in the new Europe.

If Hitler had no use for his French imitators, were Frenchmen any more inclined to favor their activities and to take their ideas seriously? Gordon insists that most Frenchmen were hostile, and that the failure of ideological collaboration can be traced to "the failure of fascism to sink roots into the French political community before or after 1940." On the whole, I think he is right; yet his own calculations as to the number of Frenchmen who joined one or several of the collaborationist groups (shaky though these statistics must be) suggest that a considerable minority either rallied to, or toyed more or less seriously with, the idea of converting France to some sort of fascist model. At least the collaborationist forces represented something more than merely a tiny lunatic fringe. It is their successors who are active again today in various noisy or clandestine grouplets of the extreme right. Fortunately, they continue to be fragmented by factional feuds, and they still must contend with a deep-rooted French tradition that values liberty over order.

Gordon's book is a useful and serious contribution. He has skillfully pieced together the rather spotty evidence, and has clarified the complex relationships between the leaders of rival factions. The only notable omission, it seems to me, concerns the attempts of certain ethnic minority groups—notably in Brittany and Alsace—to play the German card after 1940. Perhaps Gordon regards them as "collaborators" rather than "collaborationists"—a useful distinction that he has borrowed from Stanley Hoffmann, though with some changes of definition. Two flaws may be worth noting. One is a propensity to repetition, caused in part by the structure of the book, which zigzags between the topical and the chronological; but when the same fact is repeated three times on a single page, this seems a little much. The second shortcoming is a relative failure of conceptual clarity. "Fascist" and "radical right" are of course slippery terms, but they seem to be used a bit loosely; and there are puzzling references to "collaborationist socialism" as "eminently conservative," "disinclined to social revolution," yet possessing a "frenetic, nihilistic dynamism" and engaged in a search for "something new." Perhaps this suggests that we are still groping toward a fully satisfactory analysis of what we label, for want of a better term, fascism.

Gordon Wright

Gordon Wright is professor emeritus of history at Stanford University and the author of *The Ordeal of Total War* (Harper & Row).

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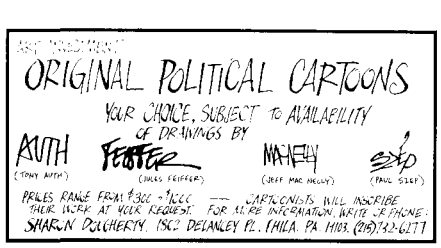

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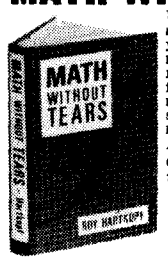

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Unfriendly

I planned to review *Naming Names* (Viking)—if you can believe it, yet another book on the Hollywood Ten—because I know a lot about the subject. But Jack Beatty, our literary editor, thought I shouldn't because the author is Victor Navasky, editor of the *Nation*, personal rivalries, political vendettas, journalistic competitors, etc., etc. Nonsense. I said I would review the book, and then I didn't. Beatty's reluctance and my sloth combined to deprive *TNR*'s readers of a critique of the all-but-universally held view that the "unfriendly witnesses" at the HUAC hearings on communism in Hollywood were virtuous heroes, and the cooperative ones were unmitigated villains. That is too simple a view, and it is Navasky's view. For an approximation of mine, see Dorothy Rabinowitz's review in the *Wall Street Journal*, Arthur Schlesinger's in the *New Leader*, and Eric Breindel's article in this month's *Commentary*. Navasky systematically undervalues the struggle of anti-communist liberals against McCarthyism, and also underestimates how much they themselves were pilloried by the McCarthyites. But what Navasky holds most against these liberals in his whining and partisan narrative was their unwillingness to be identified politically with the victims—all of them, by the way, Communists or, at minimum, fervent Communist sympathizers. The Hollywood Communists were not, as he sometimes seems to depict them, just more sincere liberals. When not simply frothy and corrupt voyeurs, they were brutally intolerant and abusive political enemies of liberals and liberal values, and celebrators of tyranny. Lester Cole, one of the Hollywood Ten, recently appeared on the letters page of Navasky's own paper (the *Nation*, November 29, 1980), indignantly denying the charge made ever so squeamishly by another old Communist, Peggy Dennis, that the Soviet Union is guilty of official anti-Semitism. I'll defend—if not to the death, at least as far as Victor Navasky would—Lester Cole's right to his Stalinism. But he's no hero in my book.

You don't write about Noam Chomsky unless you are eager to get into a long correspondence or willing to be a bad correspondent. I mentioned Chomsky in this space with reference to his apologetics on behalf of the Honorable Pol Pot. Chomsky wrote at length about an international conspiracy not to understand what he meant. Chomsky doesn't have my finicky thing about the choice of comrades or causes. His latest departure from linguistics, regarding which he is an accredited "modern master," to mass murder, regarding which he is a fool, was in a thousand-word essay defending one Professor Robert Fourrison, suspended from the faculty of the University of Lyon for arguing that the Holocaust of European Jewry is a fiction. Fourrison's book is about to be published in English by one of the crank houses that specialize in such historical revisions. The introduction will be Chomsky's little epistle in Fourrison's defense. Chomsky told Herbert Mitgang of the *Times* that he had not intended it to be used that way. On Fourrison's argument, however, he had no views he wished to state. On the question, that is, as to whether or not six million Jews were murdered, Noam Chomsky apparently is an agnostic.

The only freely elected Arab officials anywhere are those elected in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. True to his unfailing knack for doing the wrong thing at the wrong time in the wrong place, Begin has expelled two of these mayors, leaving dozens of their colleagues at home to carry on precisely the same kind of pro-terrorist mischief that provoked Begin's deportation order, and allowing the deportees to take their message abroad as martyred exiles. The first stop abroad, predictably, was the UN, where, equally predictably, Kurt Waldheim offered them the freedom of the house. The two mayors promptly announced one of those attention-riveting either-or fasts: either until they're allowed back home or unto death. Well, it turned out to be a fast of approximately 72 hours, relieved occasionally from the secretary-general's supply of Perrier. These PLO supporters may be incendiaries, but they are not serious revolutionaries or even brave men. Now, nobody is obliged to starve to prove a political point. That's a moral I take from Thomas Hobbes. But having announced their intention to do just that, didn't they owe their constituency some bated breath and one or two news photographs at death's door?

It is a pleasure to report that even if "opinion leaders" can sometimes be bought, public opinion is more resistant to cash and flackery. Such distinguished US institutions as Georgetown University and the Honorable J. William Fulbright may have joined the Arab payroll, but the campaign waged in the opinion industries, in the universities and churches, and in other forums affecting public attitudes to undermine the long-time solidarity of Americans with Israel is a failure. This revelation comes from a Harris poll finished early this fall. To friends of Israel, like me, the results couldn't have been more encouraging. Has *Time* magazine no impact on its readers? Doesn't George Ball persuade anyone? According to Harris, more Americans believe there is a US interest in avoiding military conquest of Israel than believe that there is a US interest in avoiding military conquest of Britain or West Germany. Eighty-six percent agree that Israel is "a small, courageous, democratic nation which is trying to preserve its independence." By a ratio of more than four to one, Americans sympathize more with Israel than with the Arabs. The ratio rises to 10 to one (up by 10 percent from 1976) when the PLO is substituted for the Arabs. By about three to one, Americans believe that Israel should not negotiate with the PLO. By five to one, they support continued US military aid to Israel. By more than three to one, they wouldn't reduce that aid even if doing so was the "only way" to get enough Arab oil at cheaper prices. Three Americans out of four believe the Arab nations desire the destruction of Israel. The same percentage support continued Israeli sovereignty over all of Jerusalem. More Americans would send US troops to defend Israel in the event of war than ever before. On just about all of these questions, and against expectations, support for Israel increases with education levels. Begin fares less well than his country. By a ratio of three to one, he is seen as an obstacle to peace. Jews polled separately do not grade him much higher. That his country has fared so well in American public opinion, despite his heavy-handed caprices, reflects the essential justice of its case. But it is also a tribute to the capacity of the American people to resist clichés propounded by the culture's influentials and to refuse to barter their values for oil. Ronald Reagan, take notice.

M.P.

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Working Smarter

A new buzz-word is coming into vogue among people concerned about America's economic decline. The word is *reindustrialization* — as in "the reindustrialization of America." It bespeaks the need to revitalize the economy and reverse America's slide into an economic second-rater.

The marks of malaise are all around — unemployment lines, declining living standards, entire industries in trouble, whopping foreign trade deficits. Small wonder there's so much attention being focused on ways to reindustrialize America and get our economy back on a growth track. "Even the trendy set in economic policy has sensed that something is wrong in the American economy," says one economist.

One of the main things wrong is the stunting of productivity. Productivity, or output per employee, is a key measure of economic health. When productivity grows, so does the economy in real terms, raising people's living standards. When it declines, real economic growth slows and stagnates. Increased productivity also yields resources to meet public needs, such as reducing poverty and improving environmental quality.

America traditionally has led the world in overall productivity. It still does. But other countries are catching up. If current trends continue, Japan and West Germany can be expected to surpass us during this decade. Among the non-communist industrialized nations, the U.S. lags at the bottom in productivity growth. The grim results are higher prices, unemployment, lower real pay, and a blunting of U.S. competitiveness in world markets.

American productivity actually declined in 1979 for only the second time in the last three decades. It grew at about 3% a year during the 1950s and 1960s, then slumped to less than half that rate during the '70s. Had we maintained the 3% rate during the last decade, real U.S. output would now be about $400 billion higher. Personal income would be up about $4,000 per household.

Raising productivity doesn't mean working harder. It means working *smarter*. And this demands large doses of the twin I's — investment and innovation.

More money has to be channeled into capital investment for the modern plants and machines that enable people to work more efficiently and productively. Research and development must be stepped up in the quest for new technologies and innovative ways of doing things.

Whatever has happened to Yankee ingenuity, anyway? The number of U.S. patents issued to Americans has fallen 25% since 1971 while the number issued to foreigners has risen 14%. About 40% of the patents now issued by the U.S. go to people from other countries. America's most formidable foreign competitors, Japan and West Germany, outperform us both in capital investment and research and development measured as a percentage of total national output.

The reindustrialization of America must start with recognition that invigorating our productivity is a top imperative.

Policies and programs are needed to expand saving and investment, stimulate technological advances, enhance the climate for risk-taking and innovation, encourage adequate corporate profits, and ease the tax and regulatory burdens that undercut business' ability to create, compete, and produce.

Nothing less than a rebuilding of the nation's productive might is required if America is to regain its economic health.

UNITED TECHNOLOGIES

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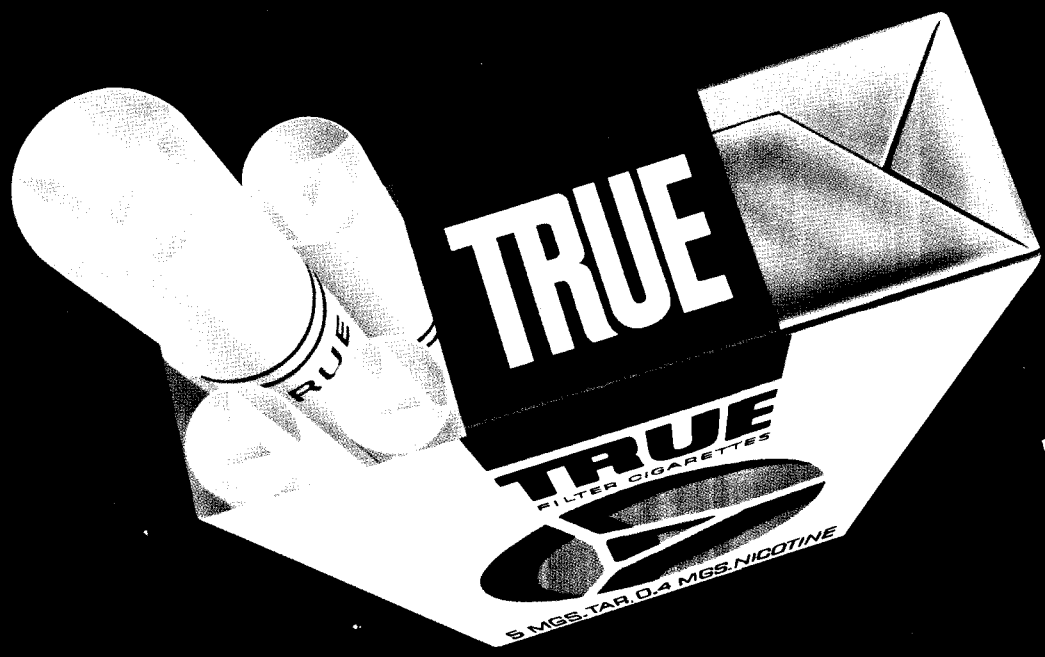

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